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MARMION

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK
THE LADY OF THE LAKE
HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

AND

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

BY

Sir Walter Scott

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POEMS

II

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY, LORD MONTAGUE

ETC., ETC., ETC.

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR

ADVERTISEMENT

It is hardly to be expected that an author whom the public have honoured with some degree of applause should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the author of *Marmion* must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character, but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat and the causes which led to it. The design of the author was, if possible, to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his story, and to prepare them for the manners of the age in which it is laid. Any historical narrative, far more an attempt at epic composition, exceeded his plan of a romantic tale; yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the public.

The poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

Ashestiel, 1808.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT I have to say respecting this poem may be briefly told. In the Introduction to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* I have mentioned the circumstances, so far as my literary life is concerned, which induced me to resign the active pursuit of an honourable profession for the more precarious resources of literature. My appointment to the Sheriffdom of Selkirk called for a change of residence. I left, therefore, the pleasant cottage I had upon the side of the Esk, for the 'pleasanter banks of the Tweed,' in order to comply with the law, which requires that the sheriff shall be resident, at least during a certain number of months, within his jurisdiction. We found a delightful retirement, by my becoming the tenant of my intimate friend and cousin-german, Colonel Russel, in his mansion of Ashestiel, which was unoccupied during his absence on military service in India. The house was adequate to our accommodation and the exercise of a limited hospitality. The situation is uncommonly beautiful, by the side of a fine river whose streams are there very favourable for angling, surrounded by the remains of natural woods, and by hills abounding in game. In point of society, according to the heartfelt phrase of Scripture, we dwelt 'amongst our own people'; and as the distance from the metropolis was only thirty miles, we were not out of reach of our Edinburgh friends, in which city we spent the terms of the summer and winter sessions of the court, that is, five or six months in the year.

An important circumstance had, about the same time, taken place in my life. Hopes had been held out to me from an influential quarter, of a nature to relieve me from the anxiety which I must have otherwise felt, as one upon the precarious tenure of whose own life rested the principal prospects of his family, and especially as one who had necessarily some dependence upon the favour of the public, which is proverbially capricious;

though it is but justice to add that in my own case I have not found it so. Mr. Pitt had expressed a wish to my personal friend, the Right Honourable William Dundas, now Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, that some fitting opportunity should be taken to be of service to me; and as my views and wishes pointed to a future rather than an immediate provision, an opportunity of accomplishing this was soon found. One of the Principal Clerks of Session, as they are called (official persons who occupy an important and responsible situation, and enjoy a considerable income), who had served upwards of thirty years, felt himself, from age and the infirmity of deafness with which it was accompanied, desirous of retiring from his official situation. As the law then stood, such official persons were entitled to bargain with their successors, either for a sum of money, which was usually a considerable one, or for an interest in the emoluments of the office during their life. My predecessor, whose services had been unusually meritorious, stipulated for the emoluments of his office during his life, while I should enjoy the survivorship on the condition that I discharged the duties of the office in the mean time. Mr. Pitt, however, having died in the interval, his administration was dissolved, and was succeeded by that known by the name of the Fox and Grenville Ministry. My affair was so far completed that my commission lay in the office subscribed by his Majesty; but, from hurry or mistake, the interest of my predecessor was not expressed in it, as had been usual in such cases. Although, therefore, it only required payment of the fees, I could not in honour take out the commission in the present state, since, in the event of my dying before him, the gentleman whom I succeeded must have lost the vested interest which he had stipulated to retain. I had the honour of an interview with Earl Spencer on the subject, and he, in the most handsome manner, gave directions that the commission should issue as originally intended; adding, that the matter having received the royal assent, he regarded only as a claim of justice what he would have willingly done as an act of favour. I never saw Mr. Fox on this or on any other occasion, and never made any appli-

cation to him, conceiving that in doing so I might have been supposed to express political opinions contrary to those which I had always professed. In his private capacity, there is no man to whom I would have been more proud to owe an obligation, had I been so distinguished.

By this arrangement I obtained the survivorship of an office the emoluments of which were fully adequate to my wishes; and as the law respecting the mode of providing for superannuated officers was, about five or six years after, altered from that which admitted the arrangement of assistant and successor, my colleague very handsomely took the opportunity of the alteration to accept of the retiring annuity provided in such cases, and admitted me to the full benefit of the office.

But although the certainty of succeeding to a considerable income, at the time I obtained it, seemed to assure me of a quiet harbour in my old age, I did not escape my share of inconvenience from the contrary tides and currents by which we are so often encountered in our journey through life. Indeed, the publication of my next poetical attempt was prematurely accelerated, from one of those unpleasant accidents which can neither be foreseen nor avoided.

I had formed the prudent resolution to endeavour to bestow a little more labour than I had yet done on my productions, and to be in no hurry again to announce myself as a candidate for literary fame. Accordingly, particular passages of a poem which was finally called *Marmion* were laboured with a good deal of care by one by whom much care was seldom bestowed. Whether the work was worth the labour or not, I am no competent judge; but I may be permitted to say that the period of its composition was a very happy one in my life; so much so, that I remember with pleasure, at this moment, some of the spots in which particular passages were composed. It is probably owing to this that the Introductions to the several cantos assumed the form of familiar epistles to my intimate friends, in which I alluded, perhaps more than was necessary or graceful, to my domestic occupations and amusements, — a loquacity which may be

excused by those who remember that I was still young, light-headed, and happy, and that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'

The misfortunes of a near relation and friend, which happened at this time, led me to alter my prudent determination, which had been to use great precaution in sending this poem into the world; and made it convenient at least, if not absolutely necessary, to hasten its publication. The publishers of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, emboldened by the success of that poem, willingly offered a thousand pounds for *Marmion*. The transaction, being no secret, afforded Lord Byron, who was then at general war with all who blacked paper, an apology for including me in his satire entitled *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.[1] I never could conceive how an arrangement between an author and his publishers, if satisfactory to the persons concerned, could afford matter of censure to any third party. I had taken no unusual or ungenerous means of enhancing the value of my merchandise, — I had never higgled a moment about the bargain, but accepted at once what I considered the handsome offer of my publishers. These gentlemen, at least, were not of opinion that they had been taken advantage of in the transaction, which indeed was one of their own framing; on the contrary, the sale

[1] ['Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan,
The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
The gibbet or the field prepared to grace;
A mighty mixture of the great and base.
And think'st thou, Scott! by vain conceit perchance,
On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy muse just half a crown per line?
No! when the sons of song descend to trade,
Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame;
Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain!
And sadly gaze on gold they cannot gain!
Such be their meed, such still the just reward
Of prostituted muse and hireling bard!
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long "Good-night to Marmion."'
Byron's Works, vol. vii, pp. 235–6.]

of the poem was so far beyond their expectation as to induce them to supply the author's cellars with what is always an acceptable present to a young Scottish housekeeper, namely, a hogshead of excellent claret.

The poem was finished in too much haste to allow me an opportunity of softening down, if not removing, some of its most prominent defects. The nature of Marmion's guilt, although similar instances were found, and might be quoted, as existing in feudal times, was nevertheless not sufficiently peculiar to be indicative of the character of the period, forgery being the crime of a commercial rather than a proud and warlike age. This gross defect ought to have been remedied or palliated. Yet I suffered the tree to lie as it had fallen. I remember my friend, Dr. Leyden, then in the East, wrote me a furious remonstrance on the subject. I have, nevertheless, always been of opinion that corrections, however in themselves judicious, have a bad effect — after publication. An author is never so decidedly condemned as on his own confession, and may long find apologists and partisans until he gives up his own cause. I was not, therefore, inclined to afford matter for censure out of my own admissions; and, by good fortune, the novelty of the subject and, if I may say so, some force and vivacity of description, were allowed to atone for many imperfections. Thus the second experiment on the public patience, generally the most perilous, — for the public are then most apt to judge with rigour what in the first instance they had received perhaps with imprudent generosity, — was in my case decidedly successful. I had the good fortune to pass this ordeal favourably, and the return of sales before me makes the copies amount to thirty-six thousand printed between 1808 and 1825, besides a considerable sale since that period. I shall here pause upon the subject of *Marmion*, and, in a few prefatory words to *The Lady of the Lake*, the last poem of mine which obtained eminent success, I will continue the task which I have imposed on myself respecting the origin of my productions.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

MARMION

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear:
Late, gazing down the steepy linn
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through;
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed;

No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam.
Away hath passed the heather-bell
That bloomed so rich on Needpath-fell;
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To sheltered dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines;
In meek despondency they eye
The withered sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill.
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold:
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But shivering follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower,
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask, — Will spring return,

And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round;
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But oh! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise,
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasped the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine
Where Glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine,

And vainly pierce the solemn gloom
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
Oh, never let those names depart!
Say to your sons, — Lo, here his grave
Who victor died on Gadite wave![1]
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given;
Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed, — and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perished worth
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia,[2] Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,

[1] Nelson. [2] Copenhagen.

And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
The pride, he would not crush, restrained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the free-
man's laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne.
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!

Oh, think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claimed his prey,
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood,

Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,
He who preserved them, PITT, lies here.

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh
Because his rival slumbers nigh,
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb;
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,
They sleep with him who sleeps below:
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save

From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke again,
'All peace on earth, good-will to men';
If ever from an English heart,
Oh, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record that Fox a Briton died!
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endowed,
How high they soared above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Looked up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of PITT and FOX alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees,
Genius and taste and talent gone,
Forever tombed beneath the stone,
Where — taming thought to human pride! —
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon FOX's grave the tear,
'T will trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
And FOX's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry, —
'Here let their discord with them die.
Speak not for those a separate doom

Whom Fate made brothers in the tomb;
But search the land, of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like again?'

Rest, ardent spirits, till the cries
Of dying nature bid you rise!
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse;
Then, oh, how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain!
Though not unmarked from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
The Bard you deigned to praise, your deathless names has sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,
My wildered fancy still beguile!
From this high theme how can I part,
Ere half unloaded is my heart!
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood
That throbs through bard in bardlike mood,
Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams could flow —
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,

In one spring-tide of ecstasy! —
It will not be — it may not last —
The vision of enchantment's past:
Like frostwork in the morning ray,
The fancy fabric melts away;
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle are gone;
And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.
Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures bleak and brown,
The farm begirt with copsewood wild,
The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son:
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day
In plucking from yon fen the reed,
And watch it floating down the Tweed,
Or idly list the shrilling lay
With which the milkmaid cheers her way.
Marking its cadence rise and fail,
As from the field, beneath her pail,
She trips it down the uneven dale;

Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn,
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learned taste refined.

But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell —
For few have read romance so well —
How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;
How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
Still throb for fear and pity's sake;
As when the Champion of the Lake[1]
Enters Morgan's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse;
Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move —
Alas, that lawless was their love! —
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
And freed full sixty knights; or when,
A sinful man and unconfessed,

[1] See Note 1.

He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And slumbering saw the vision high
He might not view with waking eye.[1]

The mightiest chiefs of British song
Scorned not such legends to prolong.
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,[2]
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on, to make them sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play;
The world defrauded of the high design,
Profaned the God-given strength, and marred
the lofty line.

Warmed by such names, well may we then,
Though dwindled sons of little men,
Essay to break a feeble lance
In the fair fields of old romance;
Or seek the moated castle's cell,
Where long through talisman and spell,
While tyrants ruled and damsels wept,

[1] See Note 2. [2] See Note 3.

Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept.
There sound the harpings of the North,
Till he awake and sally forth,
On venturous quest to prick again,
In all his arms, with all his train,
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
And wizard with his wand of might,
And errant maid on palfrey white.
Around the Genius weave their spells,
Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells;
Mystery, half veiled and half revealed;
And Honour, with his spotless shield;
Attention, with fixed eye; and Fear,
That loves the tale she shrinks to hear;
And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;
And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement shown
A worthy meed may thus be won:
Ytene's oaks [1] — beneath whose shade
Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,[2]

[1] The New Forest in Hampshire, anciently so called.
[2] See Note 4.

And that Red King,[1] who, while of old
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled —
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renewed such legendary strain;
For thou hast sung, how he of Gaul,
That Amadis so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foiled in fight
The Necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopex's mystic love:
Hear, then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

[1] William Rufus.

CANTO FIRST

THE CASTLE

I

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,[1]
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
  And Cheviot's mountains lone;
The battled towers, the donjon keep,[2]
The loophole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
  In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
  Seemed forms of giant height;
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flashed back again the western blaze,
  In lines of dazzling light.

II

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
  Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
  So heavily it hung.

[1] See Note 5. [2] See Note 6.

The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barred;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard,
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering song.

III

A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump[1] of spears
Beneath a pennon gay;
A horseman, darting from the crowd
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade
That closed the castle barricade,
His bugle-horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warned the captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

[1] See Note 7.

IV

'Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;
Lord Marmion waits below!'
Then to the castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarred,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparred,
And let the drawbridge fall.

V

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
His helm hung at the saddle bow;
Well by his visage you might know
He was a stalworth knight and keen,
And had in many a battle been;
The scar on his brown cheek revealed
A token true of Bosworth field;

His eyebrow dark and eye of fire
Showed spirit proud and prompt to ire,
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thick moustache and curly hair,
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age,
His square-turned joints and strength of limb,
Showed him no carpet knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camps a leader sage.

VI

Well was he armed from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel;[1]
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnished gold embossed.
Amid the plumage of the crest
A falcon hovered on her nest,
With wings outspread and forward breast;
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soared sable in an azure field:
The golden legend bore aright,
Who checks at me, to death is dight.[2]

[1] See Note 8. [2] See Note 9.

Blue was the charger's broidered rein;
Blue ribbons decked his arching mane;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue and trapped with gold.

VII

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name and knightly sires:
They burned the gilded spurs to claim,
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
And lightly bear the ring away;
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe;
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last and trustiest of the four
On high his forky pennon bore;
Like swallow's tail in shape and hue.

Fluttered the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazoned sable, as before,
The towering falcon seemed to soar.
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two
In hosen black and jerkins blue,
With falcons broidered on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys and array
Showed they had marched a weary way.

IX

'T is meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly armed, and ordered how,
The soldiers of the guard,
With musket, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the castle-yard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
For welcome-shot prepared:
Entered the train, and such a clang

As then through all his turrets rang
Old Norham never heard.

X

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
The trumpets flourished brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion crossed the court,
He scattered angels round.
'Welcome to Norham, Marmion!
Stout heart and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
Thou flower of English land!'

XI

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
Stood on the steps of stone
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
They hailed Lord Marmion: [1]
They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,

[1] See Note 10.

Of Tamworth tower and town;
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,
All as he lighted down.
'Now, largesse, largesse,[1] Lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazoned shield, in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold.'

XII

They marshalled him to the castle-hall,
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,
And the heralds loudly cried, —
'Room, lordlings, room for Lord Marmion,
With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his lady-love,
And to the king his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,
A sight both sad and fair;
We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
And saw his saddle bare;

[1] See Note 11.

We saw the victor win the crest
  He wears with worthy pride,
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,
  His foeman's scutcheon tied.
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight!
  Room, room, ye gentles gay,
For him who conquered in the right,
  Marmion of Fontenaye!'

XIII

Then stepped, to meet that noble lord,
  Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell and of Ford,
  And Captain of the Hold;[1]
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
  Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place —
  They feasted full and high:
The whiles a Northern harper rude
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
  'How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all,
    Stout Willimondswick,
    And Hardriding Dick,
  And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o' the Wall,
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Dead-man's-shaw.'

[1] See Note 12.

Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook
The harper's barbarous lay,
Yet much he praised the pains he took,
And well those pains did pay;
For lady's suit and minstrel's strain
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

XIV

'Now, good Lord Marmion,' Heron says,
'Of your fair courtesy,
I pray you bide some little space
In this poor tower with me.
Here may you keep your arms from rust,
May breathe your war-horse well;
Seldom hath passed a week but joust
Or feat of arms befell.
The Scots can rein a mettled steed,
And love to couch a spear; —
Saint George! a stirring life they lead
That have such neighbours near!
Then stay with us a little space,
Our Northern wars to learn;
I pray you for your lady's grace!'
Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

XV

The captain marked his altered look,
And gave the squire the sign;

A mighty wassail-bowl he took,
And crowned it high with wine.
'Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion;
But first I pray thee fair,
Where hast thou left that page of thine
That used to serve thy cup of wine,
Whose beauty was so rare?
When last in Raby-towers we met,
The boy I closely eyed,
And often marked his cheeks were wet
With tears he fain would hide.
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,
Or saddle battle-steed,
But meeter seemed for lady fair,
To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
The slender silk to lead;
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
His bosom — when he sighed,
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride!
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
To serve in lady's bower?
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour?'

XVI

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
He rolled his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath suppressed,
Yet made a calm reply:
'That boy thou thought so goodly fair,
He might not brook the Northern air.
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
I left him sick in Lindisfarne.[1]
Enough of him. — But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrimage?' —
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
Whispered light tales of Heron's dame.

XVII

Unmarked, at least unrecked, the taunt,
Careless the knight replied:
'No bird whose feathers gaily flaunt
Delights in cage to bide;
Norham is grim and grated close,
Hemmed in by battlement and fosse,
And many a darksome tower,

[1] See Note 13.

And better loves my lady bright
To sit in liberty and light
  In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our hand,
  Our falcon on our glove,
But where shall we find leash or band
  For dame that loves to rove?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
She 'll stoop when she has tired her wing.'

XVIII

'Nay, if with Royal James's bride
The lovely Lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear;
For, to the Scottish court addressed,
I journey at our king's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me and mine a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James backed the cause of that mock prince
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,[1]
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Ayton tower.'

[1] See Note 14.

XIX

'For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow;
For here be some have pricked as far
On Scottish ground as to Dunbar,
Have drunk the monks of Saint Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale,
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods.'[1]

XX

'Now, in good sooth,' Lord Marmion cried,
'Were I in warlike wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack
Than your stout forayers at my back;
But as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why, through all Scotland, near and far,
Their king is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering Border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud or thirst of spoil
Break out in some unseemly broil.
A herald were my fitting guide;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;

[1] See Note 15.

Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least.'

XXI

The captain mused a little space,
And passed his hand across his face. —
'Fain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant,
The only men that safe can ride
Mine errands on the Scottish side:
And though a bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort;
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege we have not seen.
The mass he might not sing or say
Upon one stinted meal a day;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And prayed for our success the while.
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
Is all too well in case to ride;
The priest of Shoreswood[1] — he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train,
But then no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tilmouth were the man;
A blithesome brother at the can,

[1] See Note 16.

A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale is good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of Saint Bede,
In evil hour he crossed the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife,
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know,
Yet in your guard perchance will go.'

XXII

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,
And reverently took up the word:
'Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech,
Can many a game and gambol teach;
Full well at tables can he play,

And sweep at bowls the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
And we can neither hunt nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vowed revenge of Bughtrig rude
May end in worse than loss of hood.
Let friar John in safety still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill;
Last night, to Norham there came one
Will better guide Lord Marmion.' —
'Nephew,' quoth Heron, 'by my fay,
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say.'

XXIII

'Here is a holy Palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome;
One that hath kissed the blessed tomb,
And visited each holy shrine
In Araby and Palestine;
On hills of Armenie hath been,
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
Which parted at the Prophet's rod;

In Sinai's wilderness he saw
The Mount where Israel heard the law,
Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
And of that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.[1]

XXIV

'To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,
For his sins' pardon hath he prayed.
He knows the passes of the North,
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;
Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the stream or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;
But when our John hath quaffed his ale,
As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes.'

[1] See Note 17.

XXV

'Gramercy!' quoth Lord Marmion,
'Full loath were I that Friar John,
That venerable man, for me
Were placed in fear or jeopardy:
If this same Palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
Instead of cockle-shell or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy ramblers; still
They know to charm a weary hill
With song, romance, or lay;
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way.'

XXVI

'Ah! noble sir,' young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
'This man knows much, perchance e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listened at his cell;
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,

He murmured on till morn, howe'er
No living mortal could be near.
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
As other voices spoke again.
I cannot tell — I like it not —
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear and void of wrong
Can rest awake and pray so long.
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have marked ten aves and two creeds.'[1]

XXVII

'Let pass,' quoth Marmion; 'by my fay,
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch-fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company.
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This Palmer[2] to the castle-hall.'
The summoned Palmer came in place:
His sable cowl o'erhung his face;
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought;
The scallop shell his cap did deck;
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought;

[1] See Note 18. [2] See Note 19.

His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore;
The faded palm-branch in his hand
Showed pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII

Whenas the Palmer came in hall,
Nor lord nor knight was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
  Or looked more high and keen;
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
  As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil;
His cheek was sunk, alas the while!
And when he struggled at a smile
  His eye looked haggard wild:
Poor wretch, the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face and sunburnt hair
  She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
Soon change the form that best we know —
For deadly fear can time outgo,
  And blanch at once the hair;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,

And want can quench the eye's bright grace,
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor Palmer knew them all.

XXIX

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;
The Palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,
To Scottish court to be his guide.
'But I have solemn vows to pay,
And may not linger by the way,
To fair Saint Andrew's bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound; [1]
Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.[2]
Saint Mary grant that cave or spring
Could back to peace my bosom bring,
Or bid it throb no more!'

[1] See Note 20. [2] See Note 21.

XXX

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
Where wine and spices richly steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
  The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
The captain pledged his noble guest,
The cup went through among the rest,
  Who drained it merrily;
Alone the Palmer passed it by,
Though Selby pressed him courteously.
This was a sign the feast was o'er;
It hushed the merry wassail roar,
  The minstrels ceased to sound.
Soon in the castle nought was heard
But the slow footstep of the guard
  Pacing his sober round.

XXXI

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose:
And first the chapel doors unclose;
Then, after morning rites were done —
A hasty mass from Friar John —
And knight and squire had broke their fast
On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse.

Then came the stirrup-cup in course:
Between the baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost;
High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
Solemn excuse the captain made,
Till, filing from the gate, had passed
That noble train, their lord the last.
Then loudly rung the trumpet call;
Thundered the cannon from the wall,
And shook the Scottish shore;
Around the castle eddied slow
Volumes of smoke as white as snow
And hid its turrets hoar,
Till they rolled forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOTT, A.M.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

THE scenes are desert now and bare,
Where flourished once a forest fair,[1]
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon thorn — perchance whose prickly spears
Have fenced him for three hundred years,
While fell around his green compeers —
Yon lonely thorn, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough!
Would he could tell how deep the shade
A thousand mingled branches made;
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan to the rock,
And through the foliage showed his head,
With narrow leaves and berries red;
What pines on every mountain sprung,
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook!

[1] See Note 22.

'Here, in my shade,' methinks he'd say,
'The mighty stag at noontide lay;
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game, —
The neighbouring dingle bears his name, —
With lurching step around me prowl,
And stop, against the moon to howl;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would whet;
While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by through gay greenwood.
Then oft from Newark's riven tower
Sallied a Scottish monarch's power:
A thousand vassals mustered round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;
And I might see the youth intent
Guard every pass with crossbow bent;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falconers hold the ready hawk;
And foresters, in Greenwood trim,
Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,
Attentive, as the bratchet's bay
From the dark cover drove the prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant greyhounds strain;
Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below;

While all the rocking hills reply
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,
And bugles ringing lightsomely.'

Of such proud huntings many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,
Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.[1]
But not more blithe that sylvan court,
Than we have been at humbler sport;
Though small our pomp and mean our game,
Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same.
Remember'st thou my greyhounds true?
O'er holt or hill there never flew,
From slip or leash there never sprang,
More fleet of foot or sure of fang.
Nor dull, between each merry chase,
Passed by the intermitted space;
For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic and in Gothic lore:
We marked each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now — for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill!
No longer from thy mountains dun

[1] See Note 23.

The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
And while his honest heart glows warm
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, 'The Chieftain of the Hills!'
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw
By moonlight dance on Carterhaugh;
No youthful Baron 's left to grace
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chace,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon:
And she is gone whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace;
Though if to Sylphid Queen 't were given
To show our earth the charms of heaven,
She could not glide along the air
With form more light or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafened ear
Grows quick that lady's step to hear:
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal,
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they 're fed.

From Yair — which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil —
Her long-descended lord is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.
And much I miss those sportive boys,
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
Close to my side with what delight
They pressed to hear of Wallace wight,
When, pointing to his airy mound,
I called his ramparts holy ground! [1]
Kindled their brows to hear me speak;
And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
Despite the difference of our years,
Return again the glow of theirs.
Ah, happy boys! such feelings pure,
They will not, cannot long endure;
Condemned to stem the world's rude tide,
You may not linger by the side;
For Fate shall thrust you from the shore
And Passion ply the sail and oar.
Yet cherish the remembrance still
Of the lone mountain and the rill;

[1] See Note 24.

For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
And you will think right frequently,
But, well I hope, without a sigh,
On the free hours that we have spent
Together on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions gone,
We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may gain;
There is a pleasure in this pain:
It soothes the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentler heart impressed.
'T is silent amid worldly toils,
And stifled soon by mental broils;
But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment
'Twixt resignation and content.
Oft in my mind such thoughts awake
By lone Saint Mary's silent lake: [1]
Thou know'st it well, — nor fen nor sedge
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink,
And just a trace of silver sand

[1] See Note 25.

Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
Save where of land yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scattered pine.
Yet even this nakedness has power,
And aids the feeling of the hour:
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
Where living thing concealed might lie;
Nor point retiring hides a dell
Where swain or woodman lone might dwell.
There 's nothing left to fancy's guess,
You see that all is loneliness:
And silence aids — though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills;
In summer tide so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near;
For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,[1]

[1] See Note 26.

Yet still, beneath the hallowed soil,
The peasant rests him from his toil,
And dying bids his bones be laid
Where erst his simple fathers prayed.

If age had tamed the passions' strife,
And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here have I thought 't were sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton longed to spend his age.
'T were sweet to mark the setting day
On Bourhope's lonely top decay,
And, as it faint and feeble died
On the broad lake and mountain's side,
To say, 'Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey;'
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruined tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded Flower;
And when that mountain-sound I heard,
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the Tempest brings,
'T were sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,
To sit upon the Wizard's grave,[1]

[1] See Note 27.

That Wizard Priest's whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust;
On which no sunbeam ever shines —
So superstition's creed divines —
Thence view the lake with sullen roar
Heave her broad billows to the shore;
And mark the wild-swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave;
Then, when against the driving hail
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp and trim my fire;
There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the Wizard Priest was come
To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range,
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I cleared,
And smiled to think that I had feared.

But chief 't were sweet to think such life —
Though but escape from fortune's strife —

Something most matchless good and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice,
And deem each hour to musing given
A step upon the road to heaven.

Yet him whose heart is ill at ease
Such peaceful solitudes displease;
He loves to drown his bosom's jar
Amid the elemental war:
And my black Palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Lochskene.[1]
There eagles scream from isle to shore;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar;
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven;
Through the rude barriers of the lake,
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below,
Diving, as if condemned to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prisoned by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.

[1] See Note 28.

And well that Palmer's form and mien
Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep deep down, and far within,
Toils with the rocks the roaring linn;
Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.

Marriott, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung:
Then list to me, and thou shalt know
Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

CANTO SECOND

THE CONVENT

I

THE breeze which swept away the smoke
Round Norham Castle rolled,
When all the loud artillery spoke
With lightning-flash and thunder-stroke,
As Marmion left the hold, —
It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze,
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
It freshly blew and strong,
Where, from high Whitby's cloistered pile,[1]
Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,
It bore a bark along.
Upon the gale she stooped her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home;
The merry seamen laughed to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joyed they in their honoured freight;
For on the deck, in chair of state,
The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

[1] See Note 29.

II

'T was sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to greenwood shades,
  Their first flight from the cage,
How timid, and how curious too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view
  Their wonderment engage.
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
  With many a benedicite;
One at the rippling surge grew pale,
  And would for terror pray,
Then shrieked because the sea-dog nigh
His round black head and sparkling eye
  Reared o'er the foaming spray;
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disordered by the summer gale,
Perchance lest some more worldly eye
Her dedicated charms might spy,
Perchance because such action graced
Her fair-turned arm and slender waist.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share, —
The Abbess and the Novice Clare.

III

The Abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Fair too she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
For her a timid lover sigh,
Nor knew the influence of her eye.
Love to her ear was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister wall;
The deadliest sin her mind could reach
Was of monastic rule the breach,
And her ambition's highest aim
To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.
For this she gave her ample dower
To raise the convent's eastern tower;
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She decked the chapel of the saint,
And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
With ivory and gems embossed.
The poor her convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
Reformed on Benedictine school;
Her cheek was pale, her form was spare;
Vigils and penitence austere
Had early quenched the light of youth:
But gentle was the dame, in sooth;
Though, vain of her religious sway,
She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their Abbess well.
Sad was this voyage to the dame;
Summoned to Lindisfarne, she came,
There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old
And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold
A chapter of Saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to death.

V

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair;
As yet a novice unprofessed,
Lovely and gentle, but distressed.
She was betrothed to one now dead,

Or worse, who had dishonoured fled.
Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
To one who loved her for her land;
Herself, almost heart-broken now,
Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud within Saint Hilda's gloom
Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.

VI

She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seemed to mark the waves below;
Nay, seemed, so fixed her look and eye,
To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not — 't was seeming all —
Far other scene her thoughts recall, —
A sun-scorched desert, waste and bare,
Nor waves nor breezes murmured there;
There saw she where some careless hand
O'er a dead corpse had heaped the sand,
To hide it till the jackals come
To tear it from the scanty tomb.
See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to heaven!

VII

Lovely, and gentle, and distressed —
These charms might tame the fiercest breast:

Harpers have sung and poets told
That he, in fury uncontrolled,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood.
But passions in the human frame
Oft put the lion's rage to shame;
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised with their bowl and knife
Against the mourner's harmless life.
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet grey.

VIII

And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland;
Towns, towers, and halls successive rise,
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
They marked amid her trees the hall
Of lofty Seaton-Delaval;
They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods
Rush to the sea through sounding woods;
They passed the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son;

At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who owned the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next they crossed themselves to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar
On Dunstanborough's caverned shore;
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they there,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay.

IX

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain;
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle:
Dry shod, o'er sands, twice every day
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The castle with its battled walls,

The ancient monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

X

In Saxon strength that abbey frowned,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle and shafted stalk
The arcades of an alleyed walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls the heathen Dane
Had poured his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Showed where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And mouldered in his niche the saint,

And rounded with consuming power
The pointed angles of each tower;
Yet still entire the abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

XI

Soon as they neared his turrets strong,
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close;
Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drowned amid the breakers' roar,
According chorus rose:
Down to the haven of the Isle
The monks and nuns in order file
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim;
Banner, and cross, and relics there,
To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare;
And, as they caught the sounds on air,
They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders in joyous mood
Rushed emulously through the flood
To hale the bark to land;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
And blessed them with her hand.

XII

Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the convent banquet made:
All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,
The stranger sisters roam;
Till fell the evening damp with dew,
And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
For there even summer night is chill.
Then, having strayed and gazed their fill,
They closed around the fire;
And all, in turn, essayed to paint
The rival merits of their saint,
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid, for be it known
That their saint's honour is their own.

XIII

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
How to their house three barons bold
Must menial service do,[1]
While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry, 'Fie upon your name!

[1] See Note 30.

In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew.'
'This, on Ascension-day, each year
While labouring on our harbour-pier,
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear.'
They told how in their convent-cell
A Saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled;[1]
And how, of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone
When holy Hilda prayed;
Themselves, within their holy bound,
Their stony folds had often found.
They told how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail,
And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
They do their homage to the saint.[2]

XIV

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail
To vie with these in holy tale;
His body's resting-place, of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told;[3]
How, when the rude Dane burned their pile,
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle;
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,

[1] See Note 31. [2] See Note 32. [3] See Note 33.

From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
They rested them in fair Melrose;
But though, alive, he loved it well,
Not there his relics might repose;
For, wondrous tale to tell!
In his stone coffin forth he rides,
A ponderous bark for river tides,
Yet light as gossamer it glides
Downward to Tilmouth cell.
Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint repair;
Chester-le-Street and Ripon saw
His holy corpse ere Wardilaw
Hailed him with joy and fear;
And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear.
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
His relics are in secret laid;
But none may know the place,
Save of his holiest servants three,
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
Who share that wondrous grace.

XV

Who may his miracles declare?
Even Scotland's dauntless king and heir —
  Although with them they led
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
And Loden's knights, all sheathed in mail,
And the bold men of Teviotdale —
  Before his standard fled.[1]
'T was he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turned the Conqueror back again,[2]
When, with his Norman bowyer band,
He came to waste Northumberland.

XVI

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn
If on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name:[3]
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
  And hear his anvil sound;
A deadened clang, — a huge dim form,
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm
  And night were closing round.

[1] See Note 34. [2] See Note 35. [3] See Note 36.

But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

XVII

While round the fire such legends go,
Far different was the scene of woe
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.
It was more dark and lone, that vault,
Than the worst dungeon cell;
Old Colwulf built it,[1] for his fault
In penitence to dwell,
When he for cowl and beads laid down
The Saxon battle-axe, and crown.
This den, which, chilling every sense
Of feeling, hearing, sight,
Was called the Vault of Penitence,
Excluding air and light,
Was by the prelate Sexhelm made
A place of burial for such dead
As, having died in mortal sin,
Might not be laid the church within.
'T was now a place of punishment;
Whence if so loud a shriek were sent
As reached the upper air,
The hearers blessed themselves, and said

[1] See Note 37.

The spirits of the sinful dead
  Bemoaned their torments there.

XVIII

But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle
  Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the Abbot, knew
Where the place lay, and still more few
Were those who had from him the clew
  To that dread vault to go.
Victim and executioner
Were blindfold when transported there.
In low dark rounds the arches hung,
From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;
The gravestones, rudely sculptured o'er,
Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
Were all the pavement of the floor;
The mildew-drops fell one by one,
With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
A cresset, in an iron chain,
Which served to light this drear domain,
With damp and darkness seemed to strive,
As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

XIX

There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents three,
All servants of Saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose order strict
On iron table lay;
In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown
By the pale cresset's ray.
The Abbess of Saint Hilda's there
Sat for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,
She closely drew her veil;
Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress,
Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,[1]
And she with awe looks pale;
And he, that ancient man, whose sight
Has long been quenched by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone
Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is shown,
Whose look is hard and stern, —
Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style,
For sanctity called through the isle
The Saint of Lindisfarne.

[1] See Note 38.

XX

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied;
The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.
  Her cap down o'er her face she drew;
    And, on her doublet breast,
  She tried to hide the badge of blue,
    Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the prioress' command,
A monk undid the silken band
  That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,
And down her slender form they spread
  In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister professed of Fontevraud,
Whom the Church numbered with the dead,
For broken vows and convent fled.

XXI

When thus her face was given to view, —
Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear

To those bright ringlets glistering fair, —
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and pale
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there;
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII

Her comradè was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, seared and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the Tempter ever needs
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them no visioned terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt;
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death, alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,

And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror speak!
For there were seen in that dark wall
Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall; —
Who enters at such grisly door
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread;
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless,
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Showed the grim entrance of the porch;
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were displayed,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV

These executioners were chose
As men who were with mankind foes,

And, with despite and envy fired,
Into the cloister had retired,
  Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
  Strove by deep penance to efface
    Of some foul crime the stain;
  For, as the vassals of her will,
  Such men the Church selected still
  As either joyed in doing ill,
    Or thought more grace to gain
If in her cause they wrestled down
Feelings their nature strove to own.
By strange device were they brought there,
They knew not how, and knew not where.

XXV

And now that blind old abbot rose,
  To speak the Chapter's doom
On those the wall was to enclose
  Alive within the tomb,[1]
But stopped because that woful maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essayed;
Twice she essayed, and twice in vain,
Her accents might no utterance gain;
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip:
  'Twixt each attempt all was so still,

[1] See Note 39.

You seemed to hear a distant rill —
'T was ocean's swells and falls;
For though this vault of sin and fe
Was to the sounding surge so near
A tempest there you scarce could
So massive were the walls.

XXVI

At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her he
And light came to her eye,
And colour dawned upon her cheek,
A hectic and a fluttered streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot peak
By Autumn's stormy sky;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gathered strength,
And armed herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII

'I speak not to implore your grace,
Well know I for one minute's space
Successless might I sue:
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain;

For if a death of lingering pain
To cleanse my sins be penance vain,
  Vain are your masses too.
I listened to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil;
For three long years I bowed my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,
All here, and all beyond the grave.
He saw young Clara's face more fair,
He knew her of broad lands the heir,
Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
And Constance was beloved no more.
  'T is an old tale, and often told;
    But did my fate and wish agree,
  Ne'er had been read, in story old,
  Of maiden true betrayed for gold,
    That loved, or was avenged, like me!

XXVIII

'The king approved his favourite's aim;
In vain a rival barred his claim,
  Whose fate with Clare's was plight,
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge — and on they came
  In mortal lists to fight.

Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are prayed,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock;
And hark! the throng, with thundering cry,
Shout "Marmion, Marmion to the sky,
De Wilton to the block!"
Say, ye who preach Heaven shall decide
When in the lists two champions ride,
Say, was Heaven's justice here?
When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death
Beneath a traitor's spear?
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell.'
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX

'Still was false Marmion's bridal stayed;
To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun.
"Ho! shifts she thus?" King Henry cried,
"Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun."
One way remained — the king's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land;

I lingered here, and rescue planned
For Clara and for me:
This caitiff monk for gold did swear
He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
And by his drugs my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be;
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice hath undone us both.

XXX

'And now my tongue the secret tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion.
Had fortune my last hope betrayed,
This packet, to the king conveyed,
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke.
Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still;
And come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI

'Yet dread me from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,

Full soon such vengeance will he take
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier bends,
The ire of a despotic king
Rides forth upon destruction's wing;
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,
Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep;
Some traveller then shall find my bones
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be.'

XXXII

Fixed was her look and stern her air:
Back from her shoulders streamed her hair;
The locks that wont her brow to shade
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seemed to rise more high;
Her voice despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy.
Appalled the astonished conclave sate;
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspired form,
And listened for the avenging storm;
The judges felt the victim's dread;

No hand was moved, no word was said,
  Till thus the abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:
'Sister, let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace!'
  From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
  Of execution too, and tomb,
    Paced forth the judges three;
  Sorrow it were and shame to tell
  The butcher-work that there befell,
  When they had glided from the cell
    Of sin and misery.

XXXIII

An hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day;
But ere they breathed the fresher air
They heard the shriekings of despair,
  And many a stifled groan.
With speed their upward way they take, —
Such speed as age and fear can make, —
And crossed themselves for terror's sake,
  As hurrying, tottering on,
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone
They seemed to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.

Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
His beads the wakeful hermit told;
The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
But slept ere half a prayer he said;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then couched him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

LIKE April morning clouds, that pass
With varying shadow o'er the grass,
And imitate on field and furrow
Life's checkered scene of joy and sorrow;
Like streamlet of the mountain north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the plain;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast
When the ear deems its murmur past;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
Of Light and Shade's inconstant race;
Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular;
And pleased, we listen as the breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees:
Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale!

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
I love the license all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
To raise the desultory song?
Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime
Some transient fit of loftier rhyme
To thy kind judgment seemed excuse
For many an error of the muse,
Oft hast thou said, 'If, still misspent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent,
Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source;
Approach those masters o'er whose tomb
Immortal laurels ever bloom:
Instructive of the feebler bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard;
From them, and from the paths they showed,
Choose honoured guide and practised road;
Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous days.

'Or deem'st thou not our later time
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For BRUNSWICK'S venerable hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty? —

Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivalled light sublime, —
Though martial Austria, and though all
The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her foes, —
The star of Brandenburg arose!
Thou couldst not live to see her beam
Forever quenched in Jena's stream.
Lamented chief! — it was not given
To thee to change the doom of Heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
Lamented chief! — not thine the power
To save in that presumptuous hour
When Prussia hurried to the field,
And snatched the spear, but left the shield!
Valour and skill 't was thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 't was thine to die.
Ill had it seemed thy silver hair
The last, the bitterest pang to share,
For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,
And birthrights to usurpers given;
Thy land's, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou couldst not heal!
On thee relenting Heaven bestows
For honoured life an honoured close;
And when revolves, in time's sure change,

The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her sake,
Some new Arminius shall awake,
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
To whet his sword on BRUNSWICK'S tomb.

'Or of the Red-Cross hero[1] teach,
Dauntless in dungeon as on breach.
Alike to him the sea, the shore,
The brand, the bridle, or the oar:
Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the shattered walls
Which the grim Turk, besmeared with blood,
Against the Invincible made good;
Or that whose thundering voice could wake
The silence of the polar lake,
When stubborn Russ and mettled Swede
On the warped wave their death-game played;
Or that where Vengeance and Affright
Howled round the father of the fight,
Who snatched on Alexandria's sand
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.[2]

'Or if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung

[1] Sir Sidney Smith. [2] Sir Ralph Abercromby.

From the wild harp which silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore
Till twice an hundred years rolled o'er;
When she, the bold Enchantress,[1] came,
With fearless hand and heart on flame,
From the pale willow snatched the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deemed their own Shakespeare lived again.'

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging
With praises not to me belonging,
In task more meet for mightiest powers
Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.
But say, my Erskine, hast thou weighed
That secret power by all obeyed,
Which warps not less the passive mind,
Its source concealed or undefined;
Whether an impulse, that has birth
Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours;
Or whether fitlier termed the sway
Of habit, formed in early day?

[1] Joanna Baillie.

Howe'er derived, its force confessed
Rules with despotic sway the breast,
And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain.
Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
He seeks not eager to inhale
The freshness of the mountain gale,
Content to rear his whitened wall
Beside the dank and dull canal?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree.
Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tattered plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak;
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows;
Ask if it would content him well,
At ease in those gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between?
No! not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range,
Not for fair Devon's meads forsake
Ben Nevis grey and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song,
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale,
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed,
Yet was poetic impulse given
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled,
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round surveyed;
And still I thought that shattered tower

The mightiest work of human power,
And marvelled as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind
Of forayers, who with headlong force
Down from that strength had spurred their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And, home returning, filled the hall
With revel, wassail-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seamed with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,
The Scottish clans in headlong sway
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed;

And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace
Anew each kind familiar face
That brightened at our evening fire!
From the thatched mansion's grey-haired sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought;[1]
To him the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint,
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke:
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-willed imp, a grandame's child,
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, caressed.

From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
The classic poet's well-conned task?

[1] See Note 40.

Nay, Erskine, nay — on the wild hill
Let the wild heath-bell flourish still;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine,
And leave untrimmed the eglantine:
Nay, my friend, nay — since oft thy praise
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,
Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flattened thought or cumbrous line,
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend.
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my tale!

CANTO THIRD

THE HOSTEL, OR INN

I

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode;
The mountain path the Palmer showed
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their way;
Oft on the trampling band from crown
Of some tall cliff the deer looked down;
On wing of jet from his repose
In the deep heath the blackcock rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been passed before
They gained the height of Lammermoor;
Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them at the close of day
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

II

No summons calls them to the tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the lord was gone;
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to unclose,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
On through the hamlet as they paced,
Before a porch whose front was graced
With bush and flagon trimly placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn seemed large, though rude;[1]
Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall:
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

III

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze,

[1] See Note 41.

Might see where in dark nook aloof
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savory haunch of deer.
The chimney arch projected wide;
Above, around it, and beside,
Were tools for housewives' hand;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And viewed around the blazing hearth
His followers mix in noisy mirth;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside
Full actively their host supplied.

IV

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest;
And oft Lord Marmion deigned to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made;
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,

Yet, trained in camps, he knew the art
To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May;
With open hand and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy;
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower: —
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood,
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fixed on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
Strove by a frown to quell;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The Palmer's visage fell.

VI

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;
For still, as squire and archer stared

On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whispered forth his mind:
'Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such sight?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light
Glances beneath his cowl!
Full on our lord he sets his eye;
For his best palfrey would not I
Endure that sullen scowl.'

VII

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quelled their hearts who saw
The ever-varying firelight show
That figure stern and face of woe,
Now called upon a squire:
'Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire.'

VIII

'So please you,' thus the youth rejoined,
'Our choicest minstrel 's left behind.

Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike;
To dear Saint Valentine no thrush
Sings livelier from a springtide bush,
No nightingale her lovelorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavished on rocks and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.
Now must I venture as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay.'

IX

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad;
Such have I heard in Scottish land
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer
On Lowland plains the ripened ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song:
Oft have I listened and stood still
As it came softened up the hill,
And deemed it the lament of men

Who languished for their native glen,
And thought how sad would be such sound
On Susquehanna's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles in the strain
Recalled fair Scotland's hills again!

X

SONG

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted forever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;

There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted forever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XI

Where shall the traitor rest,
He the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.

Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it, —
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XII

It ceased, the melancholy sound,
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plained as if disgrace and ill,
And shameful death, were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space
Reclining on his hand.
His thoughts I scan not; but I ween
That, could their import have been seen,
The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wished to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII

High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear for their scourge mean villains have,
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
Even while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And smiling to Fitz-Eustace said:
'Is it not strange that, as ye sung,
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,[1]
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend?'
Then first the Palmer silence broke, —
The livelong day he had not spoke, —
'The death of a dear friend.'

XIV

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity,
Marmion, whose soul could scantly brook
Even from his king a haughty look,

[1] See Note 42.

Whose accent of command controlled
In camps the boldest of the bold —
Thought, look, and utterance failed him now,
Fallen was his glance and flushed his brow:
For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes vail their eyes
Before their meanest slave.

XV

Well might he falter! — By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.
Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the tomb:
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid,
And wroth because in wild despair
She practised on the life of Clare,
Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave,
And deemed restraint in convent strange

Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders idle fear;
Secure his pardon he might hold
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way
When the stern priests surprised their prey.
His train but deemed the favourite page
Was left behind to spare his age;
Or other if they deemed, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard:
Woe to the vassal who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

XVI

His conscience slept — he deemed her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, wakened by her favourite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say
That fell so ominous and drear
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venomed throes,
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betrayed and scorned,
All lovely on his soul returned;
Lovely as when at treacherous call
She left her convent's peaceful wall,

Crimsoned with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII

'Alas!' he thought, 'how changed that mien!
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt and of disguise
Have steeled her brow and armed her eyes!
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;
Fierce and unfeminine are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair;
And I the cause — for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven! —
Would,' thought he, as the picture grows,
'I on its stalk had left the rose!
Oh, why should man's success remove
The very charms that wake his love? —
Her convent's peaceful solitude
Is now a prison harsh and rude;
And, pent within the narrow cell,
How will her spirit chafe and swell!
How brook the stern monastic laws!
The penance how — and I the cause! —
Vigil and scourge — perchance even worse!'

And twice he rose to cry, 'To horse!'
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame;
And twice he thought, 'Gave I not charge
She should be safe, though not at large?
They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head.'

XVIII

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
Their host the Palmer's speech had heard,
And talkative took up the word:
'Ay, reverend pilgrim, you who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,
To visit realms afar,
Full often learn the art to know
Of future weal or future woe,
By word, or sign, or star;
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
If, knight-like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence; — if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told.'
These broken words the menials move, —
For marvels still the vulgar love, —

And, Marmion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told:—

XIX

THE HOST'S TALE

'A clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander filled our throne, —
Third monarch of that warlike name, —
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:
A braver never drew a sword;
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power;
The same whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.[1]
I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay
Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies:
To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to round,
There never toiled a mortal arm,
It all was wrought by word and charm;
And I have heard my grandsire say
That the wild clamour and affray

[1] See Note 43.

Of those dread artisans of hell,
Who laboured under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX

'The king Lord Gifford's castle sought,
Deep labouring with uncertain thought.
Even then he mustered all his host,
To meet upon the western coast;
For Norse and Danish galleys plied
Their oars within the Firth of Clyde.
There floated Haco's banner trim [1]
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart and large of limb,
Threatening both continent and isle,
Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.
Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
And tarried not his garb to change,
But, in his wizard habit strange,[2]
Came forth, — a quaint and fearful sight:
His mantle lined with fox-skins white;
His high and wrinkled forehead bore
A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore;

[1] See Note 44. [2] See Note 45.

His shoes were marked with cross and spell,
Upon his breast a pentacle;[1]
His zone of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and trine;
And in his hand he held prepared
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI

'Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had marked strange lines upon his face;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
His eyesight dazzled seemed and dim,
As one unused to upper day;
Even his own menials with dismay
Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly sire
In this unwonted wild attire;
Unwonted, for traditions run
He seldom thus beheld the sun.
"I know," he said, — his voice was hoarse,
And broken seemed its hollow force, —
"I know the cause, although untold,
Why the king seeks his vassal's hold:
Vainly from me my liege would know
His kingdom's future weal or woe;

[1] See Note 46.

But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
His courage may do more than art.

XXII

"'Of middle air the demons proud,
Who ride upon the racking cloud,
Can read in fixed or wandering star
The issue of events afar,
But still their sullen aid withhold,
Save when by mightier force controlled.
Such late I summoned to my hall;
And though so potent was the call
That scarce the deepest nook of hell
I deemed a refuge from the spell,
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou, — who little know'st thy might
As born upon that blessed night[1]
When yawning graves and dying groan
Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown, —
With untaught valour shalt compel
Response denied to magic spell."
"Gramercy," quoth our monarch free,
"Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honoured brand,
The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,

[1] See Note 47.

Soothly I swear that, tide what tide,
The demon shall a buffet bide."
His bearing bold the wizard viewed,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renewed:
"There spoke the blood of Malcolm! — mark:
Forth pacing hence at midnight dark,
The rampart seek whose circling crown
Crests the ascent of yonder down:
A southern entrance shalt thou find;
There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
And trust thine elfin foe to see
In guise of thy worst enemy.
Couch then thy lance and spur thy steed —
Upon him! and Saint George to speed!
If he go down, thou soon shalt know
Whate'er these airy sprites can show;
If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life."

XXIII

'Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone and armed, forth rode the king
To that old camp's deserted round.
Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound
Left hand the town, — the Pictish race
The trench, long since, in blood did trace;

The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild-flowers grow;
But woe betide the wandering wight
That treads its circle in the night!
The breadth across, a bowshot clear,
Gives ample space for full career;
Opposed to the four points of heaven,
By four deep gaps are entrance given.
The southernmost our monarch passed,[1]
Halted, and blew a gallant blast;
And on the north, within the ring,
Appeared the form of England's king,
Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war:
Yet arms like England's did he wield;
Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same.
Long afterwards did Scotland know
Fell Edward was her deadliest foe.

XXIV

'The vision made our monarch start,
But soon he manned his noble heart,

[1] Edward I, surnamed Longshanks.

And in the first career they ran,
The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And razed the skin — a puny wound.
The king, light leaping to the ground,
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compelled the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;
Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandished war-axe wield
And strike proud Haco from his car,
While all around the shadowy kings
Denmark's grim ravens cowered their wings.
'T is said that in that awful night
Remoter visions met his sight,
Foreshowing future conquest far,
When our sons' sons wage Northern war;
A royal city, tower and spire,
Reddened the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore
Triumphant to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV

'The joyful king turned home again,
Headed his host, and quelled the Dane;
But yearly, when returned the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart;
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
"Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start."
Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our Lady give him rest!
Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield
Upon the brown hill's breast,[1]
And many a knight hath proved his chance
In the charmed ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;
Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight and Gilbert Hay.
Gentles, my tale is said.'

XXVI

The quaighs were deep, the liquor strong,
And on the tale the yeoman-throng

[1] See Note 48.

Had made a comment sage and long,
But Marmion gave a sign:
And with their lord the squires retire,
The rest around the hostel fire
Their drowsy limbs recline;
For pillow, underneath each head
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppressed with toil and ale, they snore;
The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;
Scarce by the pale moonlight were seen
The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, or ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And, close beside him when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form with nodding plume;
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew:

XXVIII

'Fitz-Eustace! rise, — I cannot rest;
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood;
The air must cool my feverish blood,
And fain would I ride forth to see
The scene of elfin chivalry.
Arise, and saddle me my steed;
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves;
I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale.'
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed arrayed,
While, whispering, thus the baron said: —

XXIX

'Didst never, good my youth, hear tell
That on the hour when I was born
Saint George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn?
The flattering chaplains all agree
The champion left his steed to me.

I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this elfin foe!
Blithe would I battle for the right
To ask one question at the sprite.
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,
An empty race, by fount or sea
To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel their ring.'
Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And marked him pace the village road,
And listened to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Wonder it seemed, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held and wise, —
Of whom 't was said, he scarce received
For gospel what the Church believed, —
Should, stirred by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Arrayed in plate and mail.
For little did Fitz-Eustace know

That passions in contending flow
  Unfix the strongest mind;
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
  Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But patient waited till he heard
At distance, pricked to utmost speed,
The foot-tramp of a flying steed
  Come townward rushing on;
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
Then, clattering on the village road, —
In other pace than forth he yode,
  Returned Lord Marmion.
Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And in his haste wellnigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray
The falcon-crest was soiled with clay;
And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,

At length to rest the squire reclines,
Broken and short; for still between
Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

An ancient Minstrel sagely said,
'Where is the life which late we led?'
That motley clown in Arden wood,
Whom humorous Jaques with envy viewed,
Not even that clown could amplify
On this trite text so long as I.
Eleven years we now may tell
Since we have known each other well,
Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand;
And sure, through many a varied scene,
Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,
To join the mass of ages gone;
And though deep marked, like all below,
With checkered shades of joy and woe,
Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,
Marked cities lost and empires changed,
While here at home my narrower ken
Somewhat of manners saw and men;
Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears
Fevered the progress of these years,

Yet now, days, weeks, and months but seem
The recollection of a dream,
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day
Since first I tuned this idle lay;
A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspired my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vexed boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights and Ettrick Pen
Have donned their wintry shrouds again,
And mountain dark and flooded mead
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,
Mixed with the rack, the snow mists fly;
The shepherd who, in summer sun,
Had something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen, —
He who, outstretched the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,

Viewed the light clouds with vacant look,
Or slumbered o'er his tattered book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessened tide, —
At midnight now the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.

When red hath set the beamless sun
Through heavy vapours dank and dun,
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail and sleeted rain
Against the casement's tinkling pane;
The sounds that drive wild deer and fox
To shelter in the brake and rocks
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task.
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
Till, dark above and white below,
Decided drives the flaky snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.
Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave the hearth his dogs repine;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his back he wreathes the plaid:
His flock he gathers and he guides

To open downs and mountain-sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast that whistles o'er the fells
Stiffens his locks to icicles;
Oft he looks back while, streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star, —
Loses its feeble gleam, — and then
Turns patient to the blast again,
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale;
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffened swain:[1]
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail;
And, close beside him in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,

[1] See Note 49.

His summer couch by greenwood tree,
His rustic kirn's loud revelry,
His native hill-notes tuned on high
To Marion of the blithesome eye,
His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed?

Changes not so with us, my Skene,
Of human life the varying scene?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and glee,
While the dark storm reserves its rage
Against the winter of our age;
As he, the ancient chief of Troy,
His manhood spent in peace and joy,
But Grecian fires and loud alarms
Called ancient Priam forth to arms.
Then happy those, since each must drain
His share of pleasure, share of pain, —
Then happy those, beloved of Heaven,
To whom the mingled cup is given;
Whose lenient sorrows find relief;
Whose joys are chastened by their grief.
And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
When thou of late wert doomed to twine —
Just when thy bridal hour was by —
The cypress with the myrtle tie.

Just on thy bride her sire had smiled,
And blessed the union of his child,
When love must change its joyous cheer,
And wipe affection's filial tear.
Nor did the actions next his end
Speak more the father than the friend:
Scarce had lamented Forbes paid[1]
The tribute to his minstrel's shade,
The tale of friendship scarce was told,
Ere the narrator's heart was cold —
Far may we search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind
But not around his honoured urn
Shall friends alone and kindred mourn;
The thousand eyes his care had dried
Pour at his name a bitter tide,
And frequent falls the grateful dew
For benefits the world ne'er knew.
If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name,
Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
'The widow's shield, the orphan's stay.'
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
My verse intrudes on this sad theme,
For sacred was the pen that wrote,
'Thy father's friend forget thou not;'

[1] See Note 50.

And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his grave: —
'T is little — but 't is all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When, doing nought, — and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do, —
The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
While oft our talk its topic changed,
And, desultory as our way,
Ranged unconfined from grave to gay.
Even when it flagged, as oft will chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pursue
Our sports in social silence too;
Thou gravely labouring to portray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray,
I spelling o'er with much delight
The legend of that antique knight,
Tirante by name, ycleped the White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
Jealous each other's motions viewed,
And scarce suppressed their ancient feud.
The laverock whistled from the cloud;

The stream was lively, but not loud;
From the white thorn the May-flower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our head:
Not Ariel lived more merrily
Under the blossomed bough than we.

And blithesome nights, too, have been ours,
When Winter stript the Summer's bowers.
Careless we heard, what now I hear,
The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
When fires were bright and lamps beamed gay,
And ladies tuned the lovely lay,
And he was held a laggard soul
Who shunned to quaff the sparkling bowl.
Then he whose absence we deplore,
Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
The longer missed, bewailed the more,
And thou, and I, and dear-loved Rae,
And one whose name I may not say, —
For not mimosa's tender tree
Shrinks sooner from the touch than he, —
In merry chorus well combined,
With laughter drowned the whistling wind.
Mirth was within, and Care without
Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
Not but amid the buxom scene
Some grave discourse might intervene —

Of the good horse that bore him best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest;
For, like mad Tom's, our chiefest care
Was horse to ride and weapon wear.
Such nights we've had; and, though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field-day or the drill
Seem less important now, yet still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my strain!
And mark how, like a horseman true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

CANTO FOURTH

THE CAMP

I

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
And with their light and lively call
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
Whistling they came and free of heart,
But soon their mood was changed;
Complaint was heard on every part
Of something disarranged.
Some clamoured loud for armour lost;
Some brawled and wrangled with the host;
'By Becket's bones,' cried one, 'I fear
That some false Scot has stolen my spear!'
Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,
Found his steed wet with sweat and mire,
Although the rated horseboy sware
Last night he dressed him sleek and fair.
While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,
Old Hubert shouts in fear and wonder, —
'Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
Bevis lies dying in his stall;

To Marmion who the plight dare tell
Of the good steed he loves so well?'
Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,
'What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed Palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lantern-led by Friar Rush.' [1]

II

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guessed,
Nor wholly understood,
His comrades' clamorous plaints suppressed;
He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
And did his tale display
Simply, as if he knew of nought
To cause such disarray.
Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvelled at the wonders told, —
Passed them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

[1] See Note 51.

III

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
Had reckoned with their Scottish host;
And, as the charge he cast and paid,
'Ill thou deserv'st thy hire,' he said;
'Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
Fairies have ridden him all the night,
And left him in a foam!
I trust that soon a conjuring band,
With English cross and blazing brand,
Shall drive the devils from this land
To their infernal home;
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trampled to and fro.'
The laughing host looked on the hire:
'Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou com'st among the rest,
With Scottish broadsword to be blest,
Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
And short the pang to undergo.'
Here stayed their talk, for Marmion
Gave now the signal to set on.
The Palmer showing forth the way,
They journeyed all the morning-day.

IV

The greensward way was smooth and good,
Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood;
A forest glade, which, varying still,
Here gave a view of dale and hill,
There narrower closed till overhead
A vaulted screen the branches made.
'A pleasant path,' Fitz-Eustace said;
'Such as where errant-knights might see
Adventures of high chivalry,
Might meet some damsel flying fast,
With hair unbound and looks aghast;
And smooth and level course were here,
In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells;
And oft in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger freed,
Did grateful pay her champion's meed.'
He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind,
Perchance to show his lore designed;
For Eustace much had pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall-window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome
Of Caxton or de Worde.
Therefore he spoke, — but spoke in vain,
For Marmion answered nought again.

V

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolonged by wood and hill,
  Were heard to echo far;
Each ready archer grasped his bow,
But by the flourish soon they know
  They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
Lord Marmion's order speeds the band
  Some opener ground to gain;
And scarce a furlong had they rode,
When thinner trees receding showed
  A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
  Issued a gallant train.

VI

First came the trumpets, at whose clang
So late the forest echoes rang;
On prancing steeds they forward pressed,
With scarlet mantle, azure vest;
Each at his trump a banner wore,
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore:

Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came,
In painted tabards, proudly showing
Gules, argent, or, and azure glowing,
  Attendant on a king-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held
That feudal strife had often quelled
  When wildest its alarms.

VII

He was a man of middle age,
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
  As on king's errand come;
But in the glances of his eye
A penetrating, keen, and sly
  Expression found its home;
The flash of that satiric rage
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age,
  And broke the keys of Rome.
On milk-white palfrey forth he paced;
His cap of maintenance was graced
  With the proud heron-plume.
From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,
  Silk housings swept the ground,
With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
  Embroidered round and round.

The double tressure might you see,
  First by Achaius borne,
The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
  And gallant unicorn.
So bright the king's armorial coat
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
In living colours blazoned brave,
The Lion, which his title gave;
A train, which well beseemed his state,
But all unarmed, around him wait.
  Still is thy name in high account,
    And still thy verse has charms,
  Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,[1]
    Lord Lion King-at-arms!

VIII

Down from his horse did Marmion spring
Soon as he saw the Lion-King;
For well the stately baron knew
To him such courtesy was due
Whom royal James himself had crowned,
And on his temples placed the round
  Of Scotland's ancient diadem,
And wet his brow with hallowed wine,
And on his finger given to shine
  The emblematic gem.

[1] See Note 52.

Their mutual greetings duly made,
The Lion thus his message said: —
'Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court,
Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name
And honours much his warlike fame,
My liege hath deemed it shame and lack
Of courtesy to turn him back;
And by his order I, your guide,
Must lodging fit and fair provide
Till finds King James meet time to see
The flower of English chivalry.'

IX

Though inly chafed at this delay,
Lord Marmion bears it as he may.
The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave in vain;
Strict was the Lion-King's command
That none who rode in Marmion's band
Should sever from the train.
'England has here enow of spies
In Lady Heron's witching eyes:'

To Marchmount thus apart he said,
But fair pretext to Marmion made.
The right-hand path they now decline,
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X

At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun Castle[1] crowns the bank;
For there the Lion's care assigned
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
That castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose,
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands;
A mighty mass, that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI

Crichtoun! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,

[1] See Note 53.

Thy turrets rude and tottered keep
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour or pretence,
Quartered in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence.
Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair,
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruined stair.
Still rises unimpaired below
The court-yard's graceful portico;
Above its cornice, row and row
Of fair-hewn facets richly show
Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but houseless cattle go,
To shield them from the storm.
And, shuddering, still may we explore,
Where oft whilom were captives pent,
The darkness of thy Massy More,
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
May trace in undulating line
The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII

Another aspect Crichtoun showed
As through its portal Marmion rode;
But yet 't was melancholy state
Received him at the outer gate,
For none were in the castle then
But women, boys, or aged men.
With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame
To welcome noble Marmion came;
Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
Proffered the baron's rein to hold:
For each man that could draw a sword
Had marched that morning with their lord,
Earl Adam Hepburn, — he who died[1]
On Flodden by his sovereign's side.
Long may his lady look in vain!
She ne'er shall see his gallant train
Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-Dean.
'T was a brave race before the name
Of hated Bothwell stained their fame.[2]

XIII

And here two days did Marmion rest,
With every right that honour claims,

[1] See Note 54. [2] See Note 55.

Attended as the king's own guest; —
Such the command of Royal James,
Who marshalled then his land's array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
Perchance he would not foeman's eye
Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit;
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind and wise, —
Trained in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

XIV

It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlements they walked,
And by the slowly fading light
Of varying topics talked;
And, unaware, the herald-bard
Said Marmion might his toil have spared
In travelling so far,
For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war;[1]

[1] See Note 56.

And, closer questioned, thus he told
A tale which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enrolled: —

XV

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE

'Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling;
And in its park, in jovial June,
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blithe the blackbird's lay!
The wild buck bells from ferny brake,[1]
The coot dives merry on the lake,
The saddest heart might pleasure take
To see all nature gay.
But June is to our sovereign dear
The heaviest month in all the year;
Too well his cause of grief you know,
June saw his father's overthrow.[2]
Woe to the traitors who could bring
The princely boy against his king!
Still in his conscience burns the sting.
In offices as strict as Lent
King James's June is ever spent.

[1] See Note 57. [2] See Note 58.

XVI

'When last this ruthful month was come,
And in Linlithgow's holy dome
The king, as wont, was praying;
While for his royal father's soul
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
The bishop mass was saying —
For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless king was slain —
In Catherine's aisle the monarch knelt,
With sackcloth shirt and iron belt,
And eyes with sorrow streaming;
Around him in their stalls of state
The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,
Their banners o'er them beaming.
I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafened with the jangling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stained casement gleaming;
But while I marked what next befell
It seemed as I were dreaming.
Stepped from the crowd a ghostly wight,
In azure gown, with cincture white;
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.
Now, mock me not when, good my lord,

I pledge to you my knightly word
That when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace
So stately gliding on, —
Seemed to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the saint
Who propped the Virgin in her faint,
The loved Apostle John!

XVII

'He stepped before the monarch's chair,
And stood with rustic plainness there,
And little reverence made;
Nor head, nor body, bowed, nor bent,
But on the desk his arm he leant,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice, — but never tone
So thrilled through vein, and nerve, and bone: —
"My mother sent me from afar,
Sir King, to warn thee not to war, —
Woe waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
James Stuart, doubly warned, beware:
God keep thee as He may!"

The wondering monarch seemed to seek
For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to speak,
The monitor was gone.
The marshal and myself had cast
To stop him as he outward passed;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
He vanished from our eyes,
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies.'

XVIII

While Lindesay told his marvel strange
The twilight was so pale,
He marked not Marmion's colour change
While listening to the tale;
But, after a suspended pause,
The baron spoke: 'Of Nature's laws
So strong I held the force,
That never superhuman cause
Could e'er control their course,
And, three days since, had judged your aim
Was but to make your guest your game;
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my sceptic creed,
And made me credit aught.' — He stayed,
And seemed to wish his words unsaid,

But, by that strong emotion pressed
Which prompts us to unload our breast
  Even when discovery 's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told,
  At Gifford, to his train.
Nought of the Palmer says he there,
And nought of Constance or of Clare;
The thoughts which broke his sleep he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX

'In vain,' said he, 'to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couched my head;
  Fantastic thoughts returned,
And, by their wild dominion led,
  My heart within me burned.
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reached the camp upon the wold.
The southern entrance I passed through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear, —
Yet was the blast so low and drear,
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

XX

'Thus judging, for a little space
I listened ere I left the place,
But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they serve me true,
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,
A mounted champion rise.
I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
In single fight and mixed affray,
And ever, I myself may say,
Have borne me as a knight;
But when this unexpected foe
Seemed starting from the gulf below, —
I care not though the truth I show, —
I trembled with affright;
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
I scarce could couch it right.

XXI

'Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course, — my charger fell; —
What could he 'gainst the shock of hell?
I rolled upon the plain.
High o'er my head with threatening hand

The spectre shook his naked brand, —
  Yet did the worst remain:
My dazzled eyes I upward cast, —
Not opening hell itself could blast
  Their sight like what I saw!
Full on his face the moonbeam strook! —
A face could never be mistook!
I knew the stern vindictive look,
  And held my breath for awe.
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead, —
  I well believe the last;
For ne'er from visor raised did stare
A human warrior with a glare
  So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade;
But when to good Saint George I prayed, —
The first time e'er I asked his aid, —
  He plunged it in the sheath,
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seemed to vanish from my sight:
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest night
  Sunk down upon the heath.
'T were long to tell what cause I have
  To know his face that met me there,
Called by his hatred from the grave
  To cumber upper air;

Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy.'

XXII

Marvelled Sir David of the Mount;
Then, learned in story, 'gan recount
  Such chance had happed of old,
When once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre fell of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
  With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.
'And such a phantom, too, 't is said,
With Highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,
  And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
Or where the sable pine-trees shade
Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,
  Dromouchty, or Glenmore.
And yet, whate'er such legends say
Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
  On mountain, moor, or plain,
Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold
  These midnight terrors vain;

For seldom have such spirits power
To harm, save in the evil hour
When guilt we meditate within
Or harbour unrepented sin.'
Lord Marmion turned him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,
  Then pressed Sir David's hand, —
But nought, at length, in answer said;
And here their further converse stayed,
  Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,
To Scotland's camp to take their way, —
  Such was the king's command.

XXIII

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they trode;
Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied lore;
But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that their route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They passed the glen and scanty rill.
And climbed the opposing bank, until
They gained the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV

Blackford! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom and thorn and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose on breezes thin
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din.
Now, from the summit to the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV

But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion from the crown
Of Blackford saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown:
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,[1]
Upland, and dale, and down.

[1] See Note 59.

A thousand did I say? I ween,
Thousands on thousands there were seen,
That checkered all the heath between
The streamlet and the town,
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular;
Oft giving way where still there stood
Some relics of the old oak wood,
That darkly huge did intervene
And tamed the glaring white with green:
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
And from the southern Redswire edge
To furthest Rosse's rocky ledge,
From west to east, from south to north,
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
Marmion might hear the mingled hum
Of myriads up the mountain come, —
The horses' tramp and tinkling clank,
Where chiefs reviewed their vassal rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh, —
And see the shifting lines advance,

While frequent flashed from shield and lance
The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of failing smoke declare
To embers now the brands decayed,
Where the night-watch their fires had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugged to war;
And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven,[1]
And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omened gift! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII

Nor marked they less where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pencil, bandrol,[2] there
O'er the pavilions flew.[3]

[1] See Note 60. [2] See Note 61. [3] See Note 62.

Highest and midmost was descried
The royal banner floating wide;
The staff, a pine-tree, strong and straight,
Pitched deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight,
Whene'er the western wind unrolled
With toil the huge and cumbrous fold,
And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where in proud Scotland's royal shield
The ruddy lion ramped in gold.[1]

XXIX

Lord Marmion viewed the landscape bright,
He viewed it with a chief's delight,
Until within him burned his heart,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day;
Such glance did falcon never dart
When stooping on his prey.
'Oh! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
Thy king from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay;
For, by Saint George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal nor divine
Should once to peace my soul incline,

[1] See Note 63.

Till I had dimmed their armour's shine
In glorious battle-fray!'
Answered the bard, of milder mood:
'Fair is the sight, — and yet 't were good
That kings would think withal,
When peace and wealth their land has blessed,
'T is better to sit still at rest
Than rise, perchance to fall.'

XXX

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stayed,
For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed.
When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,

Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
And as each heathy top they kissed,
It gleamed a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw,
Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-Law;
And, broad between them rolled,
The gallant Firth the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float,
Like emeralds chased in gold.
Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridle hand,
And, making demi-volt in air,
Cried, 'Where 's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land!'
The Lindesay smiled his joy to see,
Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee.

XXXI

Thus while they looked, a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
And fife, and kettle-drum,
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,

And war-pipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,
Did up the mountain come;
The whilst the bells with distant chime
Merrily tolled the hour of prime,
And thus the Lindesay spoke:
'Thus clamour still the war-notes when
The king to mass his way has ta'en,
Or to Saint Catherine's of Sienne,
Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.
To you they speak of martial fame,
But me remind of peaceful game,
When blither was their cheer,
Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,
In signal none his steed should spare,
But strive which foremost might repair
To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII

'Nor less,' he said, 'when looking forth
I view yon Empress of the North
Sit on her hilly throne,
Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers —
Nor less,' he said, 'I moan

To think what woe mischance may bring,
And how these merry bells may ring
The death-dirge of our gallant king,
  Or with their larum call
The burghers forth to watch and ward,
'Gainst Southern sack and fires to guard
  Dun-Edin's leaguered wall.
But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure or cheaply bought!
  Lord Marmion, I say nay:
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield;
  But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
That England's dames must weep in bower,
  Her monks the death-mass sing;
For never saw'st thou such a power
  Led on by such a king.'
And now, down winding to the plain,
The barriers of the camp they gain,
  And there they made a stay.
There stays the Minstrel, till he fling
His hand o'er every Border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing
Of Scotland's ancient court and king,
  In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

Edinburgh.

WHEN dark December glooms the day,
And takes our autumn joys away;
When short and scant the sunbeam throws
Upon the weary waste of snows
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard;
When sylvan occupation's done,
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
And hang in idle trophy near,
The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear;
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,
And greyhound, with his length of limb,
And pointer, now employed no more,
Cumber our parlour's narrow floor;
When in his stall the impatient steed
Is long condemned to rest and feed;
When from our snow-encircled home
Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
Since path is none, save that to bring
The needful water from the spring;
When wrinkled news-page, thrice conned o'er,
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,

And darkling politician, crossed,
Inveighs against the lingering post,
And answering housewife sore complains
Of carriers' snow-impeded wains; —
When such the country-cheer, I come
Well pleased to seek our city home;
For converse and for books to change
The forest's melancholy range,
And welcome with renewed delight
The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's riven towers,
And Ettrick stripped of forest bowers.
True, Caledonia's Queen is changed[1]
Since on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrisoned she stood,
Denying entrance or resort
Save at each tall embattled port,
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
That long is gone, — but not so long

[1] See Note 64.

Since, early closed and opening late,
Jealous revolved the studded gate,
Whose task, from eve to morning tide,
A wicket churlishly supplied.
Stern then and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin! Oh, how altered now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sitt'st, like empress at her sport,
And liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,[1]
For thy dark cloud, with umbered lower,
That hung o'er cliff and lake and tower,
Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day!

Not she, the championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enrolled,
She for the charmèd spear renowned,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground, —
Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,[2]
She gave to flow her maiden vest;
When, from the corselet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved:
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Erst hidden by the aventayle,

[1] See Note 65. [2] See *The Fairy Queen*, book III, canto IX.

And down her shoulders graceful rolled
Her locks profuse of paly gold.
They who whilom in midnight fight
Had marvelled at her matchless might,
No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved.[1]
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
And charm Malbecco's cares awhile;
And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,
Forgot his Columbella's claims,
And passion, erst unknown, could gain
The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane;
Nor durst light Paridell advance,
Bold as he was, a looser glance.
She charmed, at once, and tamed the heart,
Incomparable Britomart!

So thou, fair City! disarrayed
Of battled wall and rampart's aid,
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
Than in that panoply of war.
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
Strength and security are flown;
Still as of yore, Queen of the North!
Still canst thou send thy children forth.
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call

1 See *The Fairy Queen*, book III, canto ix.

Thy burghers rose to man thy wall
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
Thy dauntless voluntary line;
For fosse and turret proud to stand,
Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
Thy thousands, trained to martial toil,
Full red would stain their native soil,
Ere from thy mural crown there fell
The slightest knosp or pinnacle.
And if it come, as come it may,
Dun-Edin! that eventful day,
Renowned for hospitable deed,
That virtue much with Heaven may plead,
In patriarchal times whose care
Descending angels deigned to share;
That claim may wrestle blessings down
On those who fight for the Good Town,
Destined in every age to be
Refuge of injured royalty;
Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose,[1]
Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
Great Bourbon's relics sad she saw.

Truce to these thoughts! — for, as they rise,
How gladly I avert mine eyes,

[1] See Note 66.

Bodings, or true or false, to change
For Fiction's fair romantic range,
Or for tradition's dubious light,
That hovers 'twixt the day and night:
Dazzling alternately and dim,
Her wavering lamp I 'd rather trim,
Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
Creation of my fantasy,
Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
And make of mists invading men. —
Who loves not more the night of June
Than dull December's gloomy noon?
The moonlight than the fog of frost?
And can we say which cheats the most?

But who shall teach my harp to gain
A sound of the romantic strain
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear,[1]
Famed Beauclerk called, for that he loved
The minstrel and his lay approved?
Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
Decaying on Oblivion's stream;
Such notes as from the Breton tongue
Marie translated, Blondel sung? —
Oh! born Time's ravage to repair,

[1] See Note 67.

And make the dying Muse thy care;
Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
Was poising for the final blow,
The weapon from his hand could ring,
And break his glass and shear his wing,
And bid, reviving in his strain,
The gentle poet live again;
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters as in life approved,
Example honoured and beloved, —
Dear ELLIS! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart, —
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend!

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
Be long thy pleasing task, — but, oh!
No more by thy example teach
What few can practise, all can preach, —
With even patience to endure
Lingering disease and painful cure,
And boast affliction's pangs subdued
By mild and manly fortitude.

Enough, the lesson has been given:
Forbid the repetition, Heaven!

Come listen, then! for thou hast known
And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,
Who, like his Border sires of old,
Waked a wild measure rude and bold,
Till Windsor's oaks and Ascot plain
With wonder heard the Northern strain.
Come listen! bold in thy applause,
The bard shall scorn pedantic laws;
And, as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and planned,
But yet so glowing and so grand,
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat to renew,
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COURT

I

THE train has left the hills of Braid;
The barrier guard have open made —
So Lindesay bade — the palisade
That closed the tented ground;
Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through
Into its ample bound.
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the Southern band to stare,
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes;
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge that many simply thought
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought,
And little deemed their force to feel
Through links of mail and plates of steel
When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.[1]

[1] See Note 68.

II

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through,
And much he marvelled one small land
Could marshal forth such various band;
For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
Like iron towers for strength and weight,
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
With battle-axe and spear.
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
Practised their chargers on the plain,
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,
Each warlike feat to show,
To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvet, that not in vain
The sword-sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.[1]
He saw the hardy burghers there
March armed on foot with faces bare,[2]
For visor they wore none,
Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight;
But burnished were their corselets bright,
Their brigantines and gorgets light
Like very silver shone.

[1] See Note 69. [2] See Note 70.

Long pikes they had for standing fight,
Two-handed swords they wore,
And many wielded mace of weight,
And bucklers bright they bore.

III

On foot the yeoman too, but dressed
In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
With iron quilted well;
Each at his back — a slender store —
His forty days' provision bore,
As feudal statutes tell.
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,[1]
A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
A dagger-knife, and brand.
Sober he seemed and sad of cheer,
As loath to leave his cottage dear
And march to foreign strand,
Or musing who would guide his steer
To till the fallow land.
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
Did aught of dastard terror lie;
More dreadful far his ire
Than theirs who, scorning danger's name,
In eager mood to battle came,

[1] See Note 71.

Their valour like light straw on flame,
A fierce but fading fire.

IV

Not so the Borderer: — bred to war,
He knew the battle's din afar,
And joyed to hear it swell.
His peaceful day was slothful ease;
Nor harp nor pipe his ear could please
Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and blade,
The light-armed pricker plied his trade, —
Let nobles fight for fame;
Let vassals follow where they lead,
Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,
But war 's the Borderers' game.
Their gain, their glory, their delight,
To sleep the day, maraud the night,
O'er mountain, moss, and moor;
Joyful to fight they took their way,
Scarce caring who might win the day,
Their booty was secure.
These, as Lord Marmion's train passed by,
Looked on at first with careless eye,
Nor marvelled aught, well taught to know
The form and force of English bow.
But when they saw the lord arrayed

In splendid arms and rich brocade,
Each Borderer to his kinsman said, —
'Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
Canst guess which road they 'll homeward ride?
Oh! could we but on Border side,
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair!
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistering hide;
Brown Maudlin of that doublet pied
Could make a kirtle rare.'

V

Next, Marmion marked the Celtic race,
Of different language, form, and face,
A various race of man;
Just then the chiefs their tribes arrayed,
And wild and garish semblance made
The checkered trews and belted plaid,
And varying notes the war-pipes brayed
To every varying clan.
Wild through their red or sable hair
Looked out their eyes with savage stare
On Marmion as he passed;
Their legs above the knee were bare;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
And hardened to the blast;

Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red-deer's undressed hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied;
The graceful bonnet decked their head;
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid;
A broadsword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
  A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts, — but, oh!
Short was the shaft and weak the bow
  To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe.
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
And, with their cries discordant mixed,
Grumbled and yelled the pipes betwixt.

VI

Thus through the Scottish camp they passed,
And reached the city gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Armed burghers kept their watch and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous fear,

When lay encamped in field so near
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show;
At every turn with dinning clang
The armourer's anvil clashed and rang,
Or toiled the swarthy smith to wheel
The bar that arms the charger's heel,
Or axe or falchion to the side
Of jarring grindstone was applied.
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
Through street and lane and market-place,
  Bore lance or casque or sword;
While burghers, with important face,
  Described each new-come lord,
Discussed his lineage, told his name,
His following, and his warlike fame.
The Lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked the crowded street;
  There must the baron rest
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must ride, —
  Such was the king's behest.
Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
A banquet rich and costly wines [1]
  To Marmion and his train;

[1] See Note 72.

And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads,
  The palace halls they gain.

VII

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily
That night with wassail, mirth, and glee:
King James within her princely bower
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summoned to spend the parting hour;
For he had charged that his array
Should southward march by break of day.
Well loved that splendid monarch aye
  The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
  The revel loud and long.
This feast outshone his banquets past;
It was his blithest — and his last.
The dazzling lamps from gallery gay
Cast on the court a dancing ray;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing,
There ladies touched a softer string;
With long-eared cap and motley vest,
The licensed fool retailed his jest;

His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courted the ladies of their heart,
  Nor courted them in vain;
For often in the parting hour
Victorious Love asserts his power
  O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart can view
To battle march a lover true —
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
  Nor own her share of pain.

VIII

Through this mixed crowd of glee and game
The king to greet Lord Marmion came,
  While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doffed to Marmion bending low
  His broidered cap and plume.
For royal were his garb and mien:
  His cloak of crimson velvet piled,
  Trimmed with the fur of marten wild,
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
  The dazzled eye beguiled;

His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave of old renown;
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was buttoned with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX

The monarch's form was middle size,
For feat of strength or exercise
  Shaped in proportion fair;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye
  His short curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
  And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, oh! he had that merry glance
  That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue, —
Suit lightly won and short-lived pain,
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

I said he joyed in banquet bower;
But, 'mid his mirth, 't was often strange
How suddenly his cheer would change,
His look o'ercast and lower,
If in a sudden turn he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,[1]
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.
Even so 't was strange how evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,
Forward he rushed with double glee
Into the stream of revelry.
Thus dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs aside,
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tightened rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

X

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway;[2]
To Scotland's court she came,
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,

[1] See Note 73. [2] See Note 74.

And with the king to make accord
  Had sent his lovely dame.
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay king allegiance own;
  For the fair Queen of France
Sent him a turquoise ring and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
  For her to break a lance,
And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
And march three miles on Southron land[1]
And bid the banners of his band
  In English breezes dance.
And thus for France's queen he drest
His manly limbs in mailèd vest,
And thus admitted English fair
His inmost councils still to share,
And thus for both he madly planned
The ruin of himself and land!
  And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair nor France's queen
Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and sheen,
  From Margaret's eyes that fell, —
His own Queen Margaret, who in Lithgow's
    bower
All lonely sat and wept the weary hour.

[1] See Note 75.

XI

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day
The war against her native soil,
Her monarch's risk in battle broil, —
And in gay Holy-Rood the while
Dame Heron rises with a smile
Upon the harp to play.
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
The strings her fingers flew;
And as she touched and tuned them all,
Ever her bosom's rise and fall
Was plainer given to view;
For, all for heat, was laid aside
Her wimple, and her hood untied.
And first she pitched her voice to sing,
Then glanced her dark eye on the king,
And then around the silent ring,
And laughed, and blushed, and oft did say
Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,
She could not, would not, durst not play!
At length, upon the harp, with glee,
Mingled with arch simplicity,
A soft yet lively air she rung,
While thus the wily lady sung: —

XII

LOCHINVAR [1]

LADY HERON'S SONG

Oh! young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword, —
For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word, —
'Oh! come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?' —

[1] See Note 76.

'I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide —
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.'

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar, —
'Now tread we a measure!' said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, ''T were better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,

So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
'She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They 'll have fleet steeds that follow,' quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby
clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they
ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

XIII

The monarch o'er the siren hung,
And beat the measure as she sung;
And, pressing closer and more near,
He whispered praises in her ear.
In loud applause the courtiers vied,
And ladies winked and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seemed to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest too
A real or feigned disdain:

Familiar was the look, and told
Marmion and she were friends of old.
The king observed their meeting eyes
With something like displeased surprise;
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
Even in a word, or smile, or look.
Straight took he forth the parchment broad
Which Marmion's high commission showed:
'Our Borders sacked by many a raid,
Our peaceful liege-men robbed,' he said,
'On day of truce our warden slain,
Stout Barton killed, his vessels ta'en —
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain;
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn
Our herald has to Henry borne.'

XIV

He paused, and led where Douglas stood
And with stern eye the pageant viewed;
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
Who coronet of Angus bore,
And, when his blood and heart were high,
Did the third James in camp defy,
And all his minions led to die
On Lauder's dreary flat.

Princes and favourites long grew tame,
And trembled at the homely name
Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat;[1]
The same who left the dusky vale
Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,
Its dungeons and its towers,
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
To fix his princely bowers.
Though now in age he had laid down
His armour for the peaceful gown,
And for a staff his brand,
Yet often would flash forth the fire
That could in youth a monarch's ire
And minion's pride withstand;
And even that day at council board,
Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,
Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.[2]

XV

His giant-form, like ruined tower,
Though fallen its muscles' brawny vaunt,
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
Seemed o'er the gaudy scene to lower;
His locks and beard in silver grew,

[1] See Note 77. [2] See Note 78.

His eyebrows kept their sable hue.
Near Douglas when the monarch stood,
His bitter speech he thus pursued:
'Lord Marmion, since these letters say
That in the North you needs must stay
While slightest hopes of peace remain,
Uncourteous speech it were and stern
To say — Return to Lindisfarne,
Until my herald come again.
Then rest you in Tantallon hold; [1]
Your host shall be the Douglas bold, —
A chief unlike his sires of old.
He wears their motto on his blade,[2]
Their blazon o'er his towers displayed,
Yet loves his sovereign to oppose
More than to face his country's foes.
And, I bethink me, by Saint Stephen,
But e'en this morn to me was given
A prize, the first fruits of the war,
Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
A bevy of the maids of heaven.
Under your guard these holy maids
Shall safe return to cloister shades,
And, while they at Tantallon stay,
Requiem for Cochran's soul may say.'
And with the slaughtered favourite's name

[1] See Note 79. [2] See Note 80.

Across the monarch's brow there came
A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

XVI

In answer nought could Angus speak,
His proud heart swelled well-nigh to break;
He turned aside, and down his cheek
A burning tear there stole.
His hand the monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could not brook:
'Now, by the Bruce's soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive!
For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old,
I well may say of you, —
That never king did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more bold,
More tender and more true;
Forgive me, Douglas, once again.'
And, while the king his hand did strain,
The old man's tears fell down like rain.
To seize the moment Marmion tried,
And whispered to the king aside:
'Oh! let such tears unwonted plead
For respite short from dubious deed!
A child will weep a bramble's smart,
A maid to see her sparrow part,

A stripling for a woman's heart;
But woe awaits a country when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, oh! what omen, dark and high,
When Douglas wets his manly eye!'

XVII

Displeased was James that stranger viewed
And tampered with his changing mood.
'Laugh those that can, weep those that may,'
Thus did the fiery monarch say,
'Southward I march by break of day;
And if within Tantallon strong
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle-hall.'
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answered grave the royal vaunt:
'Much honoured were my humble home,
If in its halls King James should come;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood,
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby Hills the paths are steep,
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep;
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,

And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the Trent:
Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you may!'
The monarch lightly turned away,
And to his nobles loud did call,
'Lords, to the dance, — a hall! a hall!'[1]
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led Dame Heron gallantly;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out 'Blue Bonnets o'er the Border.'

XVIII

Leave we these revels now to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sailed again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide
Till James should of their fate decide,
And soon by his command
Were gently summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honoured, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
The abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which Saint she should implore;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore

[1] The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

She feared Lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt!
The sword that hung in Marmion's belt
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly King James had given,
As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under heaven
By these defenceless maids;
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
'Mid bustle of a war begun?
They deemed it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX

Their lodging, so the king assigned,
To Marmion's, as their guardian, joined;
And thus it fell that, passing nigh,
The Palmer caught the abbess' eye,
Who warned him by a scroll
She had a secret to reveal
That much concerned the Church's weal
And health of sinner's soul;
And, with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet
Within an open balcony,

That hung from dizzy pitch and high
  Above the stately street,
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

XX

At night in secret there they came,
The Palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rode high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
  You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
  On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
  Were here wrapt deep in shade;
There on their brows the moonbeam broke,
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
  And on the casements played.
And other light was none to see,
  Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree
Who left the royal revelry
  To bowne him for the war.

A solemn scene the abbess chose,
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

XXI

'O holy Palmer!' she began, —
'For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found, —
For his dear Church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love, —
How vain to those who wed above!
De Wilton and Lord Marmion wooed
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood;
Idle it were of Whitby's dame
To say of that same blood I came; —
And once, when jealous rage was high,
Lord Marmion said despiteously,
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin Swart[1]
When he came here on Simnel's part,
And only cowardice did restrain
His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain, —
And down he threw his glove. The thing
Was tried, as wont, before the king;
Where frankly did De Wilton own

[1] See Note 81.

That Swart in Guelders he had known,
And that between them then there went
Some scroll of courteous compliment.
For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger returned,
Judge how De Wilton's fury burned!
For in his packet there were laid
Letters that claimed disloyal aid
And proved King Henry's cause betrayed.
His fame, thus blighted, in the field
He strove to clear by spear and shield;—
To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unobserved,
Perchance in prayer or faith he swerved,[1]
Else how could guiltless champion quail,
Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

XXII

'His squire, who now De Wilton saw
As recreant doomed to suffer law,
Repentant, owned in vain
That while he had the scrolls in care
A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drenched him with a beverage rare;
His words no faith could gain.

[1] See Note 82.

With Clare alone he credence won,
Who, rather than wed Marmion,
Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
To give our house her livings fair
And die a vestal votaress there.
The impulse from the earth was given,
But bent her to the paths of heaven.
A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's shade,
No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
Only one trace of earthly stain,
That for her lover's loss
She cherishes a sorrow vain,
And murmurs at the cross.
And then her heritage: — it goes
Along the banks of Tame;
Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
In meadows rich the heifer lows,
The falconer and huntsman knows
Its woodlands for the game.
Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
And I, her humble votaress here,
Should do a deadly sin,
Her temple spoiled before mine eyes,
If this false Marmion such a prize
By my consent should win;
Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn

That Clare shall from our house be torn,
And grievous cause have I to fear
Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

XXIII

'Now, prisoner, helpless, and betrayed
To evil power, I claim thine aid,
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the Church of God!
For mark: when Wilton was betrayed,
And with his squire forged letters laid,
She was, alas! that sinful maid
By whom the deed was done, —
Oh! shame and horror to be said!
She was — a perjured nun!
No clerk in all the land like her
Traced quaint and varying character.
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's paramour —
For such vile thing she was — should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour;
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power.

For this she secretly retained
Each proof that might the plot reveal,
Instructions with his hand and seal;
And thus Saint Hilda deigned,
Through sinners' perfidy impure,
Her house's glory to secure
And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV

"'T were long and needless here to tell
How to my hand these papers fell;
With me they must not stay.
Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!
Who knows what outrage he might do
While journeying by the way?
O blessed Saint, if e'er again
I venturous leave thy calm domain,
To travel or by land or main,
Deep penance may I pay!
Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare;
And oh! with cautious speed
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the king:
And for thy well-earned meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine

A weekly mass shall still be thine
While priests can sing and read.
What ail'st thou? — Speak!' — For as he took
The charge a strong emotion shook
His frame, and ere reply
They heard a faint yet shrilly tone,
Like distant clarion feebly blown,
That on the breeze did die;
And loud the abbess shrieked in fear,
'Saint Withold, save us! — What is here!
Look at yon City Cross!
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear
And blazoned banners toss!'

XXV

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillared stone,[1]
Rose on a turret octagon; —
But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet-clang.
Oh! be his tomb as lead to lead
Upon its dull destroyer's head! —
A minstrel's malison is said. —
Then on its battlements they saw

[1] See Note 83.

A vision, passing Nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
Figures that seemed to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirmed could ear or eye
Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem as there
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound and blazon fair,
A summons to proclaim;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud
When flings the moon upon her shroud
A wavering tinge of flame;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midmost of the spectre crowd,
This awful summons came: — [1]

XXVI

'Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish or foreigner, give ear!
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear
I summon one and all:
I cite you by each deadly sin

[1] See Note 84.

That e'er hath soiled your hearts within;
I cite you by each brutal lust
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
By wrath, by pride, by fear,
By each o'ermastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave and dying groan!
When forty days are passed and gone,
I cite you, at your monarch's throne
To answer and appear.'
Then thundered forth a roll of names:—
The first was thine, unhappy James!
Then all thy nobles came;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
Why should I tell their separate style?
Each chief of birth and fame,
Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,
Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name;
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye;
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice did say.
But then another spoke:
'Thy fatal summons I deny,
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high

Who burst the sinner's yoke.'
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She marked not, at the scene aghast,
What time or how the Palmer passed.

XXVII

Shift we the scene. — The camp doth move;
Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
The grey-haired sire, with pious care,
To chapels and to shrines repair.
Where is the Palmer now? and where
The abbess, Marmion, and Clare?
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge:
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The Palmer still was with the band;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command
That none should roam at large.

But in that Palmer's altered mien
A wondrous change might now be seen;
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand
When lifted for a native land,
And still looked high, as if he planned
Some desperate deed afar.
His courser would he feed and stroke,
And, tucking up his sable frock,
Would first his mettle bold provoke,
Then soothe or quell his pride.
Old Hubert said that never one
He saw, except Lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII

Some half-hour's march behind there came,
By Eustace governed fair,
A troop escorting Hilda's dame,
With all her nuns and Clare.
No audience had Lord Marmion sought;
Ever he feared to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;
And safer 't was, he thought,
To wait till, from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,

Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fanned by looks and sighs
And lighted oft at lady's eyes;
He longed to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land:
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness won
He almost loathed to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause
Which made him burst through honour's laws.
If e'er he loved, 't was her alone
Who died within that vault of stone.

XXIX

And now, when close at hand they saw
North Berwick's town and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile
Before a venerable pile [1]
Whose turrets viewed afar
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.
At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable dame,

[1] See Note 85.

And prayed Saint Hilda's abbess rest
With her, a loved and honoured guest,
Till Douglas should a bark prepare
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the abbess, you may guess,
And thanked the Scottish prioress;
And tedious were to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that passed between.
O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys leave;
But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said: 'I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part; —
Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obeyed,
And Marmion and the Douglas said
That you must wend with me.
Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish earl he showed,
Commanding that beneath his care
Without delay you shall repair
To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.'

XXX

The startled abbess loud exclaimed;
But she at whom the blow was aimed

Grew pale as death and cold as lead, —
She deemed she heard her death-doom read.
'Cheer thee, my child!' the abbess said,
'They dare not tear thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armèd band.'
'Nay, holy mother, nay,'
Fitz-Eustace said, 'the lovely Clare
Will be in Lady Angus' care,
In Scotland while we stay;
And when we move, an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,
Female attendance to provide
Befitting Gloster's heir;
Nor thinks nor dreams my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass Lady Clare.
Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy
That e'en to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her safe and free
Within her kinsman's halls.'
He spoke, and blushed with earnest grace;
His faith was painted on his face,
And Clare's worst fear relieved.
The Lady Abbess loud exclaimed
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
Entreated, threatened, grieved,

To martyr, saint, and prophet prayed,
Against Lord Marmion inveighed,
And called the prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.
Her head the grave Cistertian shook:
'The Douglas and the king,' she said,
'In their commands will be obeyed;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon Hall.'

XXXI

The abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again, —
For much of state she had, —
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And 'Bid,' in solemn voice she said,
'Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he shall there written see
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coventry,[1]
Bid him his fate explore!
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurled him to the dust,
And, by a base plebeian thrust,
He died his band before.

[1] See Note 86.

God judge 'twixt Marmion and me:
He is a chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse,
Yet oft in holy writ we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise;
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah' —
Here hasty Blount broke in:
'Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;
Saint Anton' fire thee! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the lady preach?
By this good light! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion for our fond delay
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, don thy cap and mount thy horse;
The dame must patience take perforce.'

XXXII

'Submit we then to force,' said Clare,
'But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win;
Let him take living, land, and life,
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin:

And if it be the king's decree
That I must find no sanctuary
In that inviolable dome
Where even a homicide might come
  And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
  The kinsmen of the dead,
Yet one asylum is my own
  Against the dreaded hour, —
A low, a silent, and a lone,
  Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare!'
Loud weeps the abbess, and bestows
  Kind blessings many a one;
Weeping and wailing loud arose,
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
  Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
  Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And by each courteous word and deed
  To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII

But scant three miles the band had rode,
When o'er a height they passed,
And, sudden, close before them showed
His towers Tantallon vast,
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows.
The fourth did battled walls enclose,
And double mound and fosse.
By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance long,
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square;
Around were lodgings fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
Whence oft the warder could descry
The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV

Here did they rest. — The princely care
Of Douglas why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair?
Or why the tidings say,
Which varying to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
With every varying day?
And, first, they heard King James had won
Etall, and Wark, and Ford; and then,
That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvelled Marmion,
And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland;
But whispered news there came,
That while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.
Such acts to chronicles I yield;
Go seek them there and see:
Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
And not a history.
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post
Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain;

And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gathered in the Southern land,
And marched into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe and swear: —
'A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle, like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near.
Needs must I see this battle-day;
Death to my fame if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away!
The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
Hath bated of his courtesy;
No longer in his halls I 'll stay:'
Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH

TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun House, Christmas.

HEAP on more wood! — the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain,[1]
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes decked the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer,
Caroused in seas of sable beer,
While round in brutal jest were thrown
The half-gnawed rib and marrowbone,
Or listened all in grim delight
While scalds yelled out the joys of fight.
Then forth in frenzy would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly,
And dancing round the blazing pile,

[1] See Note 87.

They make such barbarous mirth the while
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blithe Christmas back again
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung,
On Christmas eve the mass was sung: [1]
That only night in all the year
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merrymen go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doffed his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of 'post and pair.'

[1] See Note 88.

All hailed, with uncontrolled delight
And general voice, the happy night
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's-head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell
How, when, and where, the monster fell,
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassail round, in good brown bowls
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce
At such high tide her savoury goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;

If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;[1]
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But oh! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'T was Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'T was Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

Still linger in our northern clime
Some remnants of the good old time,
And still within our valleys here
We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when, perchance, its far-fetched claim
To Southron ear sounds empty name;
For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
Is warmer than the mountain-stream.
And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard and flaxen hair[2]

[1] See Note 89. [2] See Note 90.

And reverent apostolic air,
The feast and holy-tide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine:
Small thought was his, in after time
E'er to be hitched into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost,
The banished race of kings revered,
And lost his land, — but kept his beard.

In these dear halls, where welcome kind
Is with fair liberty combined,
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
And flies constraint the magic wand
Of the fair dame that rules the land,
Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social cheer
Speed on their wings the passing year.
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
When not a leaf is on the bough.
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
As loath to leave the sweet domain,
And holds his mirror to her face,
And clips her with a close embrace: —
Gladly as he we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that at this time of glee
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!
For many a merry hour we've known,
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,
And leave these classic tomes in peace!
Of Roman and of Grecian lore
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
'Were pretty fellows in their day,'
But time and tide o'er all prevail —
On Christmas eve a Christmas tale —
Of wonder and of war — 'Profane!
What! leave the lofty Latian strain,
Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
To hear the clash of rusty arms;
In Fairy-land or Limbo lost,
To jostle conjurer and ghost,
Goblin and witch!' — Nay, Heber dear,
Before you touch my charter, hear;
Though Leyden aids, alas! no more,
My cause with many-languaged lore,
This may I say: — in realms of death
Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith;*
Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
The ghost of murdered Polydore;
For omens, we in Livy cross

At every turn *locutus Bos.*
As grave and duly speaks that ox
As if he told the price of stocks,
Or held in Rome republican
The place of Common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,
Their legends wild of woe and fear.
To Cambria look — the peasant see
Bethink him of Glendowerdy
And shun 'the Spirit's Blasted Tree.'[1]
The Highlander, whose red claymore
The battle turned on Maida's shore,
Will on a Friday morn look pale,
If asked to tell a fairy tale:[2]
He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
Who leaves that day his grassy ring;
Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.

Didst e'er, dear Heber, pass along
Beneath the towers of Franchémont,[3]
Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hang o'er the stream and hamlet fair?
Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
A mighty treasure buried lay,

[1] See Note 91. [2] See Note 92. [3] See Note 93.

Amassed through rapine and through wrong
By the last Lord of Franchémont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A huntsman sits its constant guard;
Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung;
Before his feet his bloodhounds lie:
An 't were not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
As true a huntsman doth he look
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever hallooed to a hound.
To chase the fiend and win the prize
In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged necromantic priest;
It is an hundred years at least
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
And neither yet has lost nor won.
And oft the conjurer's words will make
The stubborn demon groan and quake;
And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock that still amain,
Fast as 't is opened, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom,
Unless the adept shall learn to tell
The very word that clenched the spell

When Franch'mont locked the treasure cell.
An hundred years are passed and gone,
And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say,
Whose gossip history has given
My song the messenger from heaven
That warned, in Lithgow, Scotland's king,
Nor less the infernal summoning;
May pass the Monk of Durham's tale,
Whose demon fought in Gothic mail;
May pardon plead for Fordun grave,
Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who in an instant can renew
Your treasured hoards of various lore,
And furnish twenty thousand more?
Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest
Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest,
While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use;
Give them the priest's whole century,
They shall not spell you letters three, —
Their pleasure in the books the same
The magpie takes in pilfered gem.
Thy volumes, open as thy heart,

Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart;
Yet who, of all who thus employ them,
Can like the owner's self enjoy them?
But, hark! I hear the distant drum!
The day of Flodden Field is come, —
Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,
And store of literary wealth.

CANTO SIXTH

THE BATTLE

I

While great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanour, changed and cold,
Of Douglas fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuffed the battle from afar,
And hopes were none that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's king in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day, —
While these things were, the mournful
Clare
Did in the dame's devotions share;
For the good countess ceaseless prayed
To Heaven and saints her sons to aid,
And with short interval did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high baronial pride, —
A life both dull and dignified:
Yet, as Lord Marmion nothing pressed
Upon her intervals of rest,

Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthened prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

II

I said Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repelled the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vexed the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
Above the rest a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the field,
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,

And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign.
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst in ceaseless flow
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works and walls were strongly manned;
No need upon the sea-girt side:
The steepy rock and frantic tide
Approach of human step denied,
And thus these lines and ramparts rude
Were left in deepest solitude.

III

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
  And list the sea-bird's cry,
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark-grey bulwarks' side,
And ever on the heaving tide
  Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff and swelling main
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane, —
A home she ne'er might see again;
  For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,

And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown:
It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade.
Now her bright locks with sunny glow
Again adorned her brow of snow;
Her mantle rich, whose borders round
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remained a cross with ruby stone;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broidered o'er,
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dressed,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practise on the gull and crow,
Saw her at distance gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear
Some lovelorn fay she might have been,
Or in romance some spell-bound queen,

For ne'er in work-day world was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV

Once walking thus at evening tide
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And sighing thought — 'The abbess there
Perchance does to her home repair;
Her peaceful rule, where Duty free
Walks hand in hand with Charity,
Where oft Devotion's trancèd glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision and deep mystery, —
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.[1]
Oh! wherefore to my duller eye
Did still the Saint her form deny?
Was it that, seared by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low
With him that taught them first to glow?
Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command

[1] See Note 94.

That ruled thy simple maiden band.
How different now, condemned to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride!
But Marmion has to learn ere long
That constant mind and hate of wrong
Descended to a feeble girl
From Red de Clare, stout Gloster's Earl:
Of such a stem a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

V

'But see! — what makes this armour here?' —
For in her path there lay
Targe, corselet, helm; she viewed them near.
'The breastplate pierced! — Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.
Thus Wilton! — Oh! not corselet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard
On yon disastrous day!'
She raised her eyes in mournful mood, —
Wilton himself before her stood!
It might have seemed his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost,
And joy unwonted and surprise

Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare
  Each changing passion's shade:
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy with her angelic air,
And hope that paints the future fair,
  Their varying hues displayed;
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
Till all fatigued the conflict yield,
And mighty love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delayed,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply: —

VI

DE WILTON'S HISTORY

'Forget we that disastrous day
When senseless in the lists I lay.

Thence dragged, — but how I cannot know,
For sense and recollection fled, —
I found me on a pallet low
Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
Austin, — remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless pair?
Menials and friends and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed, —
He only held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care
When sense returned to wake despair;
For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds arrayed,
My hated name and form to shade,
I journeyed many a land,
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason feared,

When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge and deeds of blood,
  Or wild mad schemes upreared.
My friend at length fell sick, and said
  God would remove him soon;
And while upon his dying bed
  He begged of me a boon —
If e'er my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquered lie,
Even then my mercy should awake
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII

'Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
  Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perished of my wound, —
  None cared which tale was true;
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his palmer's dress,
For now that sable slough is shed,
And trimmed my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide
That I should be that baron's guide —

I will not name his name! —
Vengeance to God alone belongs;
But, when I think on all my wrongs,
My blood is liquid flame!
And ne'er the time shall I forget
When, in a Scottish hostel set,
Dark looks we did exchange:
What were his thoughts I cannot tell,
But in my bosom mustered Hell
Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII

'A word of vulgar augury
That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
Brought on a village tale,
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
And sent him armèd forth by night.
I borrowed steed and mail
And weapons from his sleeping band;
And, passing from a postern door,
We met and 'countered, hand to hand, —
He fell on Gifford-moor.
For the death-stroke my brand I drew, —
Oh! then my helmèd head he knew,
The palmer's cowl was gone, —
Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid, —

My hand the thought of Austin stayed;
I left him there alone.
O good old man! even from the grave
Thy spirit could thy master save:
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
Had Whitby's abbess in her fear
Given to my hand this packet dear,
Of power to clear my injured fame
And vindicate De Wilton's name.
Perchance you heard the abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of hell
That broke our secret speech —
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or featly was some juggle played,
A tale of peace to teach.
Appeal to Heaven I judged was best
When my name came among the rest.

IX

'Now here within Tantallon hold
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield

When the Dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave — his armourer's care
Ere morn shall every breach repair;
For nought, he said, was in his halls
But ancient armour on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and grey-haired men;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.[1]
And now I watch my armour here,
By law of arms, till midnight 's near;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

X

'There soon again we meet, my Clare!
This baron means to guide thee there:
Douglas reveres his king's command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs and strung by toil,
Once more' — 'O Wilton! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more?
And is there not an humble glen

[1] Where James encamped before taking post on Flodden.

Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor? —
That reddening brow! — too well I know
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow
While falsehood stains thy name:
Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
Clare can a warrior's feelings know
And weep a warrior's shame,
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame!'

XI

That night upon the rocks and bay
The midnight moonbeam slumbering lay,
And poured its silver light and pure
Through loophole and through embrasure
Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
But chief where archèd windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride
The sober glances fall.
Much was there need; though seamed with scars,
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,

Though two grey priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.
Amid that dim and smoky light,
Checkering the silvery moonshine bright,
A bishop by the altar stood,[1]
A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen and rochet white.
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that in a barbarous age
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doffed his furred gown and sable hood;
O'er his huge form and visage pale
He wore a cap and shirt of mail,
And leaned his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore in battle fray
His foeman's limbs to shred away,[2]
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.
He seemed as, from the tombs around
Rising at judgment-day,

[1] See Note 95. [2] See Note 96.

Some giant Douglas may be found
In all his old array;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels;
And think what next he must have felt
At buckling of the falchion belt!
And judge how Clara changed her hue
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,
He once had found untrue!
Then Douglas struck him with his blade:
'Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
For king, for church, for lady fair,
See that thou fight.'
And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said: 'Wilton! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble;
For He who honour best bestows
May give thee double.'
De Wilton sobbed, for sob he must:
'Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust

That Douglas is my brother!'
'Nay, nay,' old Angus said, 'not so;
To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
Thy wrongs no longer smother.
I have two sons in yonder field;
And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
Upon them bravely — do thy worst,
And foul fall him that blenches first!'

XIII

Not far advanced was morning day
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe-conduct for his band
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide.
The ancient earl with stately grace
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whispered in an undertone,
'Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown.'
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopped to bid adieu:
'Though something I might plain,' he said,
'Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your king's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I stayed,
Part we in friendship from your land,

And, noble earl, receive my hand.'
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke: —
'My manors, halls, and bowers shall still
Be open at my sovereign's will
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my king's alone,
From turret to foundation-stone —
The hand of Douglas is his own,
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp.'

XIV

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And — 'This to me!' he said,
'An 't were not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And first I tell thee, haughty peer,
He who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate;
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
Even in thy pitch of pride,
Here in thy hold, thy vassals near, —

Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword, —
I tell thee, thou 'rt defied!
And if thou saidst I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or Highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied!'
On the earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age:
Fierce he broke forth, — 'And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms — what, warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall.' [1]
Lord Marmion turned, — well was his need, —
And dashed the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous grate behind him rung;
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars descending razed his plume.

XV

The steed along the drawbridge flies
Just as it trembled on the rise;

[1] See Note 97.

Not lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when Lord Marmion reached his band,
He halts, and turns with clenchèd hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
'Horse! horse!' the Douglas cried, 'and chase!'
But soon he reined his fury's pace:
'A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed? [1]
At first in heart it liked me ill
When the king praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line;
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.
'T is pity of him too,' he cried:
'Bold can he speak and fairly ride,
I warrant him a warrior tried.'
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

[1] See Note 98.

XVI

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They crossed the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scanned,
And missed the Palmer from the band.
'Palmer or not,' young Blount did say,
'He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth, it was in strange array.'
'In what array?' said Marmion quick.
'My lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long with clink and bang
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loophole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the keep,
Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work
Against the Saracen and Turk:
Last night it hung not in the hall;
I thought some marvel would befall.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best steed,

A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say
The earl did much the Master[1] pray
To use him on the battle-day,
But he preferred' — 'Nay, Henry, cease!
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain — I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day?'

XVII

'In brief, my lord, we both descried —
For then I stood by Henry's side —
The Palmer mount and outwards ride
Upon the earl's own favourite steed.
All sheathed he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight;
Lord Angus wished him speed.'
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke: —
'Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!'
He muttered; ''T was nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.
O dotage blind and gross!

[1] His eldest son, the Master of Angus.

Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
  My path no more to cross.
How stand we now? — he told his tale
To Douglas, and with some avail;
  'T was therefore gloomed his rugged brow.
Will Surrey dare to entertain
'Gainst Marmion charge disproved and vain?
  Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun,
Must separate Constance from the nun —
Oh! what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!
A Palmer too! — no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye;
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion.'

XVIII

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reached at eve the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent[1] closed their march.
There now is left but one frail arch,
  Yet mourn thou not its cells;
Our time a fair exchange has made:

[1] See Note 99.

Hard by, in hospitable shade,
A reverend pilgrim dwells,
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood
That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.
Yet did Saint Bernard's abbot there
Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train and Clare.
Next morn the baron climbed the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamped on Flodden edge;
The white pavilions made a show
Like remnants of the winter snow
Along the dusky ridge.
Long Marmion looked: — at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry
Amid the shifting lines;
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears,
The eastern sunbeam shines.
Their front now deepening, now extending,
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know
They watched the motions of some foe
Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watched them as they crossed
The Till by Twisel Bridge.[1]
High sight it is and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing
Upon the eastern bank you see;
Still pouring down the rocky den
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang,
And many a chief of birth and rank,

[1] See Note 100.

Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

XX

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
  Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
  His host Lord Surrey lead?
What vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
O Douglas, for thy leading wand!
  Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
Oh! for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight
And cry, 'Saint Andrew and our right!'
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockburn!
The precious hour has passed in vain,

And England's host has gained the plain,
Wheeling their march and circling still
Around the base of Flodden hill.

XXI

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
'Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon! Hap what hap,
My basnet to a 'prentice cap,
Lord Surrey 's o'er the Till!
Yet more! yet more! — how fair arrayed
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly.'
'Stint in thy prate,' quoth Blount, 'thou 'dst best,
And listen to our lord's behest.'
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,
'This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight King James, — as well I trust

That fight he will, and fight he must, —
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry while the battle joins.'

XXII

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,
Far less would listen to his prayer
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And muttered as the flood they view,
'The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw;
Lord Angus may the abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me.'
Then on that dangerous ford and deep
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately:
And not a moment will he bide
Till squire or groom before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven perforce,
The southern bank they gain.

Behind them straggling came to shore,
As best they might, the train:
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharmed, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That on a hillock standing lone
Did all the field command.

XXIII

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host for deadly fray;[1]
Their marshalled lines stretched east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation passed
From the loud cannon mouth;
Not in the close successive rattle
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.
The hillock gained, Lord Marmion stayed:

[1] See Note 101.

'Here, by this cross,' he gently said,
'You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
Oh! think of Marmion in thy prayer! —
Thou wilt not? — well, no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten picked archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.
But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again.'
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire, but spurred amain,
And, dashing through the battle-plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV

'The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!
Short greeting serves in time of strife.
Thus have I ranged my power:
Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,

My sons command the vaward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;[1]
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rearward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithely share;
There fight thine own retainers too
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true.'
'Thanks, noble Surrey!' Marmion said,
Nor further greeting there he paid,
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of 'Marmion! Marmion!' that the cry,
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With Lady Clare upon the hill,
On which — for far the day was spent —
The western sunbeams now were bent;
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,

[1] See Note 102.

Could plain their distant comrades view.
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
'Unworthy office here to stay!
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.
But see! look up — on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.'
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.
Scarce could they hear or see their foes
Until at weapon-point they close.
They close in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air:

Oh! life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long looked the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And first the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears,
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white seamew.
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumèd crests of chieftains brave
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see.
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook and falchions flashed amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly;
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,

Still bear them bravely in the fight,
  Although against them come
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
And many a rugged Border clan,
  With Huntly and with Home.

XXVII

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle,
Though there the western mountaineer
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'T was vain. — But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile cheered Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
  The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
  Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
  Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,
  The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's-mast in the gale,

When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It wavered 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear:
'By heaven and all its saints! I swear
I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads and patter prayer, —
I gallop to the host.'
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer tráin.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made for a space an opening large, —
The rescued banner rose, —
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree rooted from the ground
It sank among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too, — yet stayed,
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rushed by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops or reels;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone.
The scattered van of England wheels; —
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roared, 'Is Wilton there?'
They fly, or, maddened by despair,
Fight but to die, — 'Is Wilton there?'
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drenched with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strained the broken brand;
His arms were smeared with blood and sand.
Dragged from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion! . . .
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said, 'By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head!

Good-night to Marmion.'
'Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes,' said Eustace; 'peace!'

XXIX

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:
'Where 's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon, — charge again!
Cry, "Marmion to the rescue!" — Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!
Yet my last thought is England's — fly,
To Dacre bear my signet-ring;
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie:
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His lifeblood stains the spotless shield;
Edmund is down; my life is reft;
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire, —
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England 's lost.
Must I bid twice? — hence, varlets! fly! —
Leave Marmion here alone — to die.'

They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmured, 'Is there none
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessèd water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst!'

XXX

O Woman! in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou! —
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When with the baron's casque the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stooped her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain's side
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.

Where shall she turn? — behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
Drink. weary. pilgrim. drink. and. pray.
For. the. kind. soul. of. Sibyl. Grey.
Who. built. this. cross. and. well.
She filled the helm and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head;
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrive the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And, as she stooped his brow to lave —
'Is it the hand of Clare,' he said,
'Or injured Constance, bathes my head?'
Then, as remembrance rose, —
'Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!'
'Alas!' she said, 'the while, —
Oh! think of your immortal weal!

In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She — died at Holy Isle.'
Lord Marmion started from the ground
As light as if he felt no wound,
Though in the action burst the tide
In torrents from his wounded side.
'Then it was truth,' he said — 'I knew
That the dark presage must be true.
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be! — this dizzy trance —
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand.'
Then fainting down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling monk.

XXXII

With fruitless labour Clara bound
And strove to staunch the gushing wound;
The monk with unavailing cares
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,

A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear;
For that she ever sung,
'*In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,*
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!'
So the notes rung.
'Avoid thee, Fiend! — with cruel hand
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!
Oh! look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
Oh! think on faith and bliss!
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this.'
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
And 'Stanley!' was the cry.
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye;
With dying hand above his head
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted 'Victory! —
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!'
Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing,
Where Huntly, and where Home?
Oh! for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blasts might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side
Afar the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils and bleeds and dies
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish — for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sibyl's Cross the plunderers stray.
'O lady,' cried the monk, 'away!'
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair

Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV

But as they left the darkening heath
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well,
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.

Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves from wasted lands
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field, as snow,
When streams are swoln and southwinds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band
Disordered through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song
Shall many an age that wail prolong;
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear
And broken was her shield!

XXXV

Day dawns upon the mountain's side.
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one;
The sad survivors all are gone.
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
  Nor cherish hope in vain
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
  May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
  And fell on Flodden plain:[1]
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clenched within his manly hand,
  Beseemed the monarch slain.
But oh! how changed since yon blithe night!
Gladly I turn me from the sight
  Unto my tale again.

[1] See Note 103.

XXXVI

Short is my tale: — Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb with Gothic sculpture fair
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.
Now vainly for its site you look;
'T was levelled when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral stormed and took,[1]
But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
  His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
  His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods a peasant swain
Followed his lord to Flodden plain, —
One of those flowers whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as 'wede away:'

[1] See Note 104.

Sore wounded, Sibyl's Cross he spied,
And dragged him to its foot, and died
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripped and gashed the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;
And thus in the proud baron's tomb
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII

Less easy task it were to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone:
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sibyl Grey,
And broke her font of stone;
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair,
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion brave.

When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune and be still.
If ever in temptation strong
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong,
If every devious step thus trod
Still led thee further from the road,
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, 'He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right.'

XXXVIII

I do not rhyme to that dull elf
Who cannot image to himself
That all through Flodden's dismal night
Wilton was foremost in the fight,
That when brave Surrey's steed was slain
'T was Wilton mounted him again;
'T was Wilton's brand that deepest hewed
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood:
Unnamed by Holinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again,
And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden Field.
Nor sing I to that simple maid

To whom it must in terms be said
That king and kinsmen did agree
To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state, —
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny passed the joke;
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Katherine's hand the stocking threw;
And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
'Love they like Wilton and like Clare!'

L'ENVOY

TO THE READER

WHY then a final note prolong,
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede?
To statesmen grave, if such may deign
To read the minstrel's idle strain,
Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart — as PITT!
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best!
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true?
And knowledge to the studious sage,
And pillow soft to head of age!
To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task and merry holiday!
To all, to each, a fair good-night,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

Quid dignum memorare tuis, Hispania, terris,
Vox humana valet! — CLAUDIAN.

TO

JOHN WHITMORE, ESQ.

AND TO THE COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR RELIEF OF THE PORTUGUESE SUFFERERS IN WHICH HE PRESIDES

THIS POEM

COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND UNDER THEIR MANAGEMENT IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

WALTER SCOTT

PREFACE

THE following Poem is founded upon a Spanish Tradition, particularly detailed in the Notes; but bearing, in general, that Don Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain, when the Invasion of the Moors was impending, had the temerity to descend into an ancient vault, near Toledo, the opening of which had been denounced as fatal to the Spanish Monarchy. The legend adds, that his rash curiosity was mortified by an emblematical representation of those Saracens who, in the year 714, defeated him in battle, and reduced Spain under their dominion. I have presumed to prolong the Vision of the Revolutions of Spain down to the present eventful crisis of the Peninsula; and to divide it, by a supposed change of scene, into Three Periods. The First of these represents the Invasion of the Moors, the Defeat and Death of Roderick, and closes with the peaceful occupation of the country by the Victors. The Second Period embraces the state of the Peninsula when the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the East and West Indies had raised to the highest pitch the renown of their arms; sullied, however, by superstition and cruelty. An allusion to the inhumanities of the Inquisition terminates this picture. The Last Part of the Poem opens with the state of Spain previous to the unparalleled treachery of Bonaparte; gives a sketch of the usurpation attempted upon that unsuspicious and friendly kingdom, and terminates with the arrival of the British succours. It may be further proper to mention that the object of the Poem is less to commemorate or detail particular incidents, than to exhibit a general and impressive picture of the several periods brought upon the stage.

I am too sensible of the respect due to the Public, especially by one who has already experienced more than ordinary indulgence, to offer any apology for the inferiority of the poetry to the subject it is chiefly designed to commemorate. Yet I think

it proper to mention that while I was hastily executing a work, written for a temporary purpose, and on passing events, the task was most cruelly interrupted by the successive deaths of Lord President Blair and Lord Viscount Melville. In those distinguished characters I had not only to regret persons whose lives were most important to Scotland, but also whose notice and patronage honoured my entrance upon active life; and, I may add, with melancholy pride, who permitted my more advanced age to claim no common share in their friendship. Under such interruptions, the following verses, which my best and happiest efforts must have left far unworthy of their theme, have, I am myself sensible, an appearance of negligence and incoherence, which, in other circumstances, I might have been able to remove.

EDINBURGH, June 24, 1811.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

INTRODUCTION

I

Lives there a strain whose sounds of mounting fire
May rise distinguished o'er the din of war;
Or died it with yon Master of the Lyre,
Who sung beleaguered Ilion's evil star?
Such, Wellington, might reach thee from afar,
Wafting its descant wide o'er Ocean's range;
Nor shouts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
All as it swelled 'twixt each loud trumpet-change,
That clangs to Britain victory, to Portugal revenge!

II

Yes! such a strain, with all o'erpowering measure,
Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
Each voice of fear or triumph, woe or pleasure,
That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around;
The thundering cry of hosts with conquest crowned,
The female shriek, the ruined peasant's moan,
The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
The foiled oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
A Nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown.

III

But we, weak minstrels of a laggard day,
Skilled but to imitate an elder page,
Timid and raptureless, can we repay
The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
Thou givest our lyres a theme, that might engage
Those that could send thy name o'er sea and land,
While sea and land shall last; for Homer's rage
A theme; a theme for Milton's mighty hand —
How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band!

IV

Ye mountains stern! within whose rugged breast
The friends of Scottish freedom found repose;
Ye torrents! whose hoarse sounds have soothed their rest,
Returning from the field of vanquished foes;
Say, have ye lost each wild majestic close,
That erst the choir of Bards or Druids flung;
What time their hymn of victory arose,
And Cattraeth's glens with voice of triumph rung,[1]
And mystic Merlin harped, and grey-haired Llywarch sung?

[1] See Note 105.

V

O, if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
As sure your changeful gales seem oft to say,
When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
Like trumpet-jubilee or harp's wild sway;
If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
Then lend the note to him has loved you long!
Who pious gathered each tradition grey,
That floats your solitary wastes along,
And with affection vain gave them new voice in song.

VI

For not till now, how oft soe'er the task
Of truant verse hath lightened graver care,
From Muse or Sylvan was he wont to ask,
In phrase poetic, inspiration fair;
Careless he gave his numbers to the air,
They came unsought for, if applauses came;
Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer:
Let but his verse befit a hero's fame,
Immortal be the verse! — forgot the poet's name!

VII

Hark, from yon misty cairn their answer tost:
'Minstrel! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
Capricious-swelling now, may soon be lost,

Like the light flickering of a cottage fire;
If to such task presumptuous thou aspire
Seek not from us the meed to warrior due:
Age after age has gathered son to sire,
Since our grey cliffs the din of conflict knew,
Or, pealing through our vales, victorious bugles blew.

VIII

'Decayed our old traditionary lore,
Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
By milkmaid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted spring;[1]
Save where their legends grey-haired shepherds sing,
That now scarce win a listening ear but thine,
Of feuds obscure and Border ravaging,
And rugged deeds recount in rugged line
Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne.

IX

'No! search romantic lands, where the near Sun
Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,
Where the rude villager, his labour done,
In verse spontaneous chants some favoured name,[2]
Whether Olalia's charms his tribute claim,
Her eye of diamond and her locks of jet,

[1] See Note 106. [2] See Note 107.

Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,[1]
He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
Old Albin's red claymore, green Erin's bayonet!

X

'Explore those regions, where the flinty crest
Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
Where in the proud Alhambra's ruined breast
Barbaric monuments of pomp repose;
Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
Than the fierce Moor float o'er Toledo's fane,
From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain.

XI

'There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
Still lightens in the sunburnt native's eye;
The stately port, slow step, and visage dark
Still mark enduring pride and constancy.
And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,
Iberia! oft thy crestless peasantry
Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
Have seen, yet dauntless stood — 'gainst fortune fought and died.

[1] See Note 108.

XII

'And cherished still by that unchanging race,
Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine;
Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
Legend and vision, prophecy and sign;
Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
With Gothic imagery of darker shade.
Forming a model meet for minstrel line,
Go, seek such theme!' — The Mountain Spirit said:
With filial awe I heard — I heard, and I obeyed.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

I

REARING their crests amid the cloudless skies,
And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
As from a trembling lake of silver white.
Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
Of the broad burial-ground outstretched below,
And nought disturbs the silence of the night;
All sleeps in sullen shade, or silver glow,
All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow.

II

All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
Or, distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp,
Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride,
To guard the limits of King Roderick's camp.
For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
Which glimmered back, against the moon's fair lamp,
Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
And standards proudly pitched, and warders armed between.

III

But of their monarch's person keeping ward,
Since last the deep-mouthed bell of vespers tolled,
The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
The post beneath the proud cathedral hold:
A band unlike their Gothic sires of old,
Who, for the cap of steel and iron mace,
Bear slender darts and casques bedecked with gold,
While silver-studded belts their shoulders grace,
Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place.

IV

In the light language of an idle court,
They murmured at their master's long delay,
And held his lengthened orisons in sport:
'What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
To wear in shrift and prayer the night away?
And are his hours in such dull penance past,
For fair Florinda's plundered charms to pay?' [1]
Then to the east their weary eyes they cast,
And wished the lingering dawn would glimmer forth at last.

V

But, far within, Toledo's prelate lent
An ear of fearful wonder to the king;

[1] See Note 109.

The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
So long that sad confession witnessing:
For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
Such as are lothly uttered to the air,
When Fear, Remorse, and Shame the bosom wring,
And Guilt his secret burden cannot bear,
And Conscience seeks in speech a respite from Despair.

VI

Full on the prelate's face and silver hair
The stream of failing light was feebly rolled;
But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
Was shadowed by his hand and mantle's fold.
While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
Proud Alaric's descendant could not brook
That mortal man his bearing should behold,
Or boast that he had seen, when conscience shook,
Fear tame a monarch's brow, remorse a warrior's look.

VII

The old man's faded cheek waxed yet more pale,
As many a secret sad the king bewrayed;
As sign and glance eked out the unfinished tale,
When in the midst his faltering whisper staid.
'Thus royal Witiza[1] was slain,' he said;
'Yet, holy father, deem not it was I.'

[1] See Note 110.

Thus still Ambition strives her crimes to shade.
'O, rather deem 't was stern necessity!
Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die.

VIII

'And if Florinda's shrieks alarmed the air,
If she invoked her absent sire in vain
And on her knees implored that I would spare,
Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash refrain!
All is not as it seems — the female train
Know by their bearing to disguise their mood:' —
But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,
Sent to the Monarch's cheek the burning blood —
He stayed his speech abrupt — and up the prelate stood.

IX

'O hardened offspring of an iron race!
What of thy crimes, Don Roderick, shall I say?
What alms or prayers or penance can efface
Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!
For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,
Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his boast?
How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,
Unless, in mercy to yon Christian host,
He spare the shepherd lest the guiltless sheep be lost.'

X

Then kindled the dark tyrant in his mood,
And to his brow returned its dauntless gloom;
'And welcome then,' he cried, 'be blood for blood,
For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!
Yet will I know whence come they or by whom.
Show, for thou canst — give forth the fated key,
And guide me, priest, to that mysterious room
Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
His nation's future fates a Spanish king shall see.' [1]

XI

'Ill-fated Prince! recall the desperate word,
Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford
Never to former monarch entrance-way;
Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
Save to a king, the last of all his line,
What time his empire totters to decay,
And treason digs beneath her fatal mine,
And high above impends avenging wrath divine.'

XII

'Prelate! a monarch's fate brooks no delay;
Lead on!' — The ponderous key the old man took,

[1] See Note III.

And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,
Then on an ancient gateway bent his look;
And, as the key the desperate king essayed,
Low muttered thunders the cathedral shook,
And twice he stopped and twice new effort made,
Till the huge bolts rolled back and the loud hinges brayed.

XIII

Long, large, and lofty was that vaulted hall;
Roof, walls, and floor were all of marble stone,
Of polished marble, black as funeral pall,
Carved o'er with signs and characters unknown.
A paly light, as of the dawning, shone
Through the sad bounds, but whence they could not spy,
For window to the upper air was none;
Yet by that light Don Roderick could descry
Wonders that ne'er till then were seen by mortal eye.

XIV

Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place;
Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.
Moulded they seemed for kings of giant race,
That lived and sinned before the avenging flood;

This grasped a scythe, that rested on a mace;
This spread his wings for flight, that pondering stood,
Each stubborn seemed and stern, immutable of mood.

XV

Fixed was the right-hand giant's brazen look
Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
As if its ebb he measured by a book,
Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand;
In which was wrote of many a fallen land,
Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven:
And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand —
'Lo, DESTINY and TIME! to whom by Heaven
The guidance of the earth is for a season given.'

XVI

Even while they read, the sand-glass wastes away;
And, as the last and lagging grains did creep,
That right-hand giant 'gan his club upsway,
As one that startles from a heavy sleep.
Full on the upper wall the mace's sweep
At once descended with the force of thunder,
And, hurtling down at once in crumbled heap,
The marble boundary was rent asunder,
And gave to Roderick's view new sights of fear and wonder.

XVII

For they might spy beyond that mighty breach
Realms as of Spain in visioned prospect laid,
Castles and towers, in due proportion each,
As by some skilful artist's hand portrayed:
Here, crossed by many a wild Sierra's shade
And boundless plains that tire the traveller's eye;
There, rich with vineyard and with olive glade,
Or deep-embrowned by forests huge and high,
Or washed by mighty streams that slowly murmured by.

XVIII

And here, as erst upon the antique stage
Passed forth the band of masquers trimly led,
In various forms and various equipage,
While fitting strains the hearer's fancy fed;
So, to sad Roderick's eye in order spread,
Successive pageants filled that mystic scene,
Showing the fate of battles ere they bled,
And issue of events that had not been;
And ever and anon strange sounds were heard betwe

XIX

First shrilled an unrepeated female shriek!
It seemed as if Don Roderick knew the call,
For the bold blood was blanching in his cheek.

Then answered kettle-drum and atabal,
Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the ear appall,
The Tecbir war-cry and the Lelie's yell [1]
Ring wildly dissonant along the hall.
Needs not to Roderick their dread import tell —
'The Moor!' he cried, 'the Moor! — ring out the tocsin bell!

XX

'They come! they come! I see the groaning lands
White with the turbans of each Arab horde;
Swart Zaarah joins her misbelieving bands,
Alla and Mahomet their battle-word,
The choice they yield, the Koran or the sword.
See how the Christians rush to arms amain!
In yonder shout the voice of conflict roared,
The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain —
Now, God and Saint Iago strike for the good cause of Spain!

XXI

'By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians yield! [2]
Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field —
Is not yon steed Orelia? — Yes, 't is mine!
But never was she turned from battle line:
Lo! where the recreant spurs o'er stock and stone! —

[1] See Note 112. [2] See Note 113.

Curses pursue the slave, and wrath divine!
Rivers ingulf him!' — 'Hush,' in shuddering tone,
The prelate said; 'rash prince, yon visioned form's
thine own.'

XXII

Just then, a torrent crossed the flier's course;
The dangerous ford the kingly likeness tried;
But the deep eddies whelmed both man and horse,
Swept like benighted peasant down the tide;
And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,
As numerous as their native locust band;
Berber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,
With naked scimitars mete out the land,
And for the bondsmen base the free-born natives brand.

XXIII

Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose
The loveliest maidens of the Christian line;
Then, menials, to their misbelieving foes
Castile's young nobles held forbidden wine;
Then, too, the holy Cross, salvation's sign,
By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
And the deep aisles of the polluted shrine
Echoed, for holy hymn and organ-tone,
The Santon's frantic dance, the Fakir's gibbering
moan.

XXIV

How fares Don Roderick? — E'en as one who spies
Flames dart their glare o'er midnight's sable woof,
And hears around his children's piercing cries,
And sees the pale assistants stand aloof;
While cruel Conscience brings him bitter proof
His folly or his crime have caused his grief;
And while above him nods the crumbling roof,
He curses earth and Heaven — himself in chief —
Desperate of earthly aid, despairing Heaven's relief!

XXV

That scythe-armed Giant turned his fatal glass
And twilight on the landscape closed her wings;
Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass,
And in their stead rebeck or timbrel rings;
And to the sound the bell-decked dancer springs,
Bazars resound as when their marts are met,
In tourney light the Moor his jerrid flings,
And on the land as evening seemed to set,
The Imaum's chant was heard from mosque or minaret.

XXVI

So passed that pageant. Ere another came,
The visionary scene was wrapped in smoke,

Whose sulphurous wreaths were crossed by sheets
of flame;
With every flash a bolt explosive broke,
Till Roderick deemed the fiends had burst their yoke
And waved 'gainst heaven the infernal gonfalone!
For War a new and dreadful language spoke,
Never by ancient warrior heard or known;
Lightning and smoke her breath, and thunder was her
tone.

XXVII

From the dim landscape roll the clouds away —
The Christians have regained their heritage;
Before the Cross has waned the Crescent's ray,
And many a monastery decks the stage,
And lofty church and low-browed hermitage.
The land obeys a Hermit and a Knight, —
The Genii these of Spain for many an age;
This clad in sackcloth, that in armour bright,
And that was VALOUR named, this BIGOTRY was hight.

XXVIII

VALOUR was harnessed like a chief of old,
Armed at all points, and prompt for knightly
gest;
His sword was tempered in the Ebro cold,
Morena's eagle plume adorned his crest,
The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast.

Fierce he stepped forward and flung down his gage;
As if of mortal kind to brave the best.
Him followed his companion, dark and sage
As he my Master sung, the dangerous Archimage.

XXIX

Haughty of heart and brow the warrior came,
In look and language proud as proud might be,
Vaunting his lordship, lineage, fights, and fame:
Yet was that barefoot monk more proud than he;
And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
Till ermined Age and Youth in arms renowned,
Honouring his scourge and haircloth, meekly kissed the ground.

XXX

And thus it chanced that VALOUR, peerless knight,
Who ne'er to King or Kaiser veiled his crest,
Victorious still in bull-feast or in fight,
Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
Stooped ever to that anchoret's behest;
Nor reasoned of the right nor of the wrong,
But at his bidding laid the lance in rest,
And wrought fell deeds the troubled world along,
For he was fierce as brave and pitiless as strong.

XXXI

Oft his proud galleys sought some newfound world,
That latest sees the sun or first the morn;
Still at that wizard's feet their spoils he hurled, —
Ingots of ore from rich Potosi borne,
Crowns by Caciques, aigrettes by Omrahs worn,
Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and foul;
Idols of gold from heathen temples torn,
Bedabbled all with blood. — With grisly scowl
The hermit marked the stains and smiled beneath his cowl.

XXXII

Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
Tribute to Heaven of gratitude and praise;
And at his word the choral hymns awake,
And many a hand the silver censer sways,
But with the incense-breath these censers raise
Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire;
The groans of prisoned victims mar the lays,
And shrieks of agony confound the quire;
While, 'mid the mingled sounds, the darkened scenes expire.

XXXIII

Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
As once again revolved that measured sand:

Such sounds as when, for sylvan dance prepared,
Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band;
When for the light bolero ready stand
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met,[1]
He conscious of his broidered cap and band,
She of her netted locks and light corsette,
Each tiptoe perched to spring and shake the castanet.

XXXIV

And well such strains the opening scene became;
For VALOUR had relaxed his ardent look,
And at a lady's feet, like lion tame,
Lay stretched, full loath the weight of arms to brook;
And softened BIGOTRY upon his book
Pattered a task of little good or ill:
But the blithe peasant plied his pruning-hook,
Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
And rung from village-green the merry seguidille.

XXXV

Grey Royalty, grown impotent of toil,
Let the grave sceptre slip his lazy hold;
And careless saw his rule become the spoil
Of a loose female and her minion bold.
But peace was on the cottage and the fold,

[1] See Note 114.

From court intrigue, from bickering faction far;
Beneath the chestnut-tree love's tale was told,
And to the tinkling of the light guitar
Sweet stooped the western sun, sweet rose the evening star.

XXXVI

As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand
When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
Awhile perchance bedecked with colours sheen,
While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
Till darker folds obscured the blue serene
And blotted heaven with one broad sable cloud,
Then sheeted rain burst down and whirlwinds howled aloud: —

XXXVII

Even so, upon that peaceful scene was poured,
Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign band,
And He, their leader, wore in sheath his sword,
And offered peaceful front and open hand,
Veiling the perjured treachery he planned,
By friendship's zeal and honour's specious guise,
Until he won the passes of the land;
Then burst were honour's oath and friendship's ties!
He clutched his vulture grasp and called fair Spain his prize.

XXXVIII

An iron crown his anxious forehead bore:
And well such diadem his heart became
Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
Or checked his course for piety or shame;
Who, trained a soldier, deemed a soldier's fame
Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
Though neither truth nor honour decked his name;
Who, placed by fortune on a monarch's throne,
Recked not of monarch's faith or mercy's kingly tone.

XXXIX

From a rude isle his ruder lineage came:
The spark that, from a suburb-hovel's hearth
Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
Hath not a meaner or more sordid birth.
And for the soul that bade him waste the earth —
The sable land-flood from some swamp obscure,
That poisons the glad husband-field with dearth,
And by destruction bids its fame endure,
Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and impure.

XL

Before that leader strode a shadowy form;
Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor showed,

With which she beckoned him through fight and
storm,
And all he crushed that crossed his desperate road,
Nor thought, nor feared, nor looked on what he trode.
Realms could not glut his pride, blood could not
slake,
So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad:
It was AMBITION bade his terrors wake,
Nor deigned she, as of yore, a milder form to take.

XLI

No longer now she spurned at mean revenge,
Or staid her hand for conquered foeman's moan,
As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
By Cæsar's side she crossed the Rubicon.
Nor joyed she to bestow the spoils she won,
As when the banded powers of Greece were tasked
To war beneath the Youth of Macedon:
No seemly veil her modern minion asked,
He saw her hideous face and loved the fiend unmasked.

XLII

That prelate marked his march — on banners blazed
With battles won in many a distant land,
On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed;
'And hopest thou, then,' he said, 'thy power shall
stand?

O, thou hast builded on the shifting sand
And thou hast tempered it with slaughter's flood;
And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand,
Gore-moistened trees shall perish in the bud,
And by a bloody death shall die the Man of Blood!'

XLIII

The ruthless leader beckoned from his train
A wan fraternal shade, and bade him kneel,
And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
While trumpets rang and heralds cried 'Castile!' [1]
Not that he loved him — No! — In no man's weal,
Scarce in his own, e'er joyed that sullen heart;
Yet round that throne he bade his warriors wheel,
That the poor puppet might perform his part
And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start.

XLIV

But on the natives of that land misused
Not long the silence of amazement hung,
Nor brooked they long their friendly faith abused;
For with a common shriek the general tongue
Exclaimed, 'To arms!' and fast to arms they sprung.
And VALOUR woke, that Genius of the land!

[1] See Note 115.

Pleasure and ease and sloth aside he flung,
As burst the awakening Nazarite his band
When 'gainst his treacherous foes he clenched his dreadful hand.

XLV

That mimic monarch now cast anxious eye
Upon the satraps that begirt him round,
Now doffed his royal robe in act to fly,
And from his brow the diadem unbound.
So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle wound,
From Tarik's walls to Bilboa's mountains blown,
These martial satellites hard labour found,
To guard awhile his substituted throne;
Light recking of his cause, but battling for their own.

XLVI

From Alpuhara's peak that bugle rung,
And it was echoed from Corunna's wall;
Stately Seville responsive war-shout flung,
Grenada caught it in her Moorish hall;
Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
And, foremost still where Valour's sons are met,
Fast started to his gun each fiery Miquelet.

XLVII

But unappalled and burning for the fight,
The invaders march, of victory secure,
Skilful their force to sever or unite,
And trained alike to vanquish or endure.
Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to insure,
Discord to breathe and jealousy to sow,
To quell by boasting and by bribes to lure;
While nought against them bring the unpractised foe,
Save hearts for freedom's cause and hands for freedom's blow.

XLVIII

Proudly they march — but, O, they march not forth
By one hot field to crown a brief campaign,
As when their eagles, sweeping through the North,
Destroyed at every stoop an ancient reign!
Far other fate had Heaven decreed for Spain;
In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,
New Patriot armies started from the slain,
High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide,[1]
And oft the God of Battles blest the righteous side.

XLIX

Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,
Remained their savage waste. With blade and brand

[1] See Note 116.

By day the invaders ravaged hill and dale,
But with the darkness the Guerilla band
Came like night's tempest and avenged the land,
And claimed for blood the retribution due,
Probed the hard heart and lopped the murd'rous hand;
And Dawn, when o'er the scene her beams she threw,
Midst ruins they had made the spoilers' corpses knew.

L

What minstrel verse may sing or tongue may tell,
Amid the visioned strife from sea to sea,
How oft the Patriot banners rose or fell,
Still honoured in defeat as victory?
For that sad pageant of events to be
Showed every form of fight by field and flood;
Slaughter and Ruin, shouting forth their glee,
Beheld, while riding on the tempest scud,
The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrenched with blood!

LI

Then Zaragoza — blighted be the tongue
That names thy name without the honour due!
For never hath the harp of minstrel rung
Of faith so felly proved, so firmly true!

Mine, sap, and bomb thy shattered ruins knew,
Each art of war's extremity had room,
Twice from thy half-sacked streets the foe withdrew,
And when at length stern Fate decreed thy doom,
They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.[1]

LII

Yet raise thy head, sad city! Though in chains,
Enthralled thou canst not be! Arise, and claim
Reverence from every heart where Freedom reigns,
For what thou worshippest! — thy sainted dame,
She of the Column, honoured be her name
By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love!
And like the sacred relics of the flame
That gave some martyr to the blessed above,
To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove!

LIII

Nor thine alone such wreck. Gerona fair!
Faithful to death thy heroes should be sung,
Manning the towers, while o'er their heads the air
Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung;
Now thicker darkening where the mine was sprung,
Now briefly lightened by the cannon's flare,

[1] See Note 117.

Now arched with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
And reddening now with conflagration's glare,
While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare.

LIV

While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
While the earth shook and darkened was the sky,
And wide destruction stunned the listening ear,
Appalled the heart, and stupefied the eye, —
Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry,
In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
Whene'er her soul is up and pulse beats high,
Whether it hail the wine-cup or the fight,
And bid each arm be strong or bid each heart be light.

LV

Don Roderick turned him as the shout grew loud —
A varied scene the changeful vision showed,
For, where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
A gallant navy stemmed the billows broad.
From mast and stern Saint George's symbol flowed,
Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear;
Mottling the sea their landward barges rowed,
And flashed the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
And the wild beach returned the seamen's jovial cheer.

LVI

It was a dread yet spirit-stirring sight!
The billows foamed beneath a thousand oars,
Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,
Legions on legions brightening all the shores.
Then banners rise and cannon-signal roars,
Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,
Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-flourish pours,
And patriot hopes awake and doubts are dumb,
For, bold in Freedom's cause, the bands of Ocean come!

LVII

A various host they came — whose ranks display
Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight:
The deep battalion locks its firm array,
And meditates his aim the marksman light;
Far glance the lines of sabres flashing bright,
Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing mead;
Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,
Nor the fleet ordnance whirled by rapid steed,
That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed.

LVIII

A various host — from kindred realms they came,
Brethren in arms but rivals in renown —

For yon fair bands shall merry England claim,
And with their deeds of valour deck her crown.
Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,
And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,
And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
And freeborn thoughts which league the soldier with the laws.

LIX

And, O loved warriors of the minstrel's land!
Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave!
The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
And harsher features, and a mien more grave;
But ne'er in battle-field throbbed heart so brave
As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid;
And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,
And level for the charge your arms are laid,
Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset staid?

LX

Hark! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings,
Mingling wild mirth with war's stern minstrelsy,
His jest while each blithe comrade round him flings
And moves to death with military glee:
Boast, Erin, boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
In kindness warm and fierce in danger known,

Rough nature's children, humorous as she:
And He, yon Chieftain — strike the proudest tone
Of thy bold harp, green Isle! — the hero is thine own.

LXI

Now on the scene Vimeira should be shown,
On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,
And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze: —
But shall fond fable mix with heroes' praise?
Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs room?
And dare her wild-flowers mingle with the bays
That claim a long eternity to bloom
Around the warrior's crest and o'er the warrior's tomb?

LXII

Or may I give adventurous Fancy scope,
And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
That hides futurity from anxious hope,
Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
And painting Europe rousing at the tale
Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurled,
While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
And Fame, with clarion-blast and wings unfurled,
To freedom and revenge awakes an injured world?

LXIII

O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
Since Fate has marked futurity her own:
Yet Fate resigns to worth the glorious past,
The deeds recorded and the laurels won.
Then, though the Vault of Destiny be gone,[1]
King, prelate, all the phantasms of my brain,
Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
One note of pride and fire, a patriot's parting strain!

[1] See Note 118.

CONCLUSION

I

'Who shall command Estrella's mountain-tide
Back to the source, when tempest-chafed, to hie?
Who, when Gascogne's vexed gulf is raging wide,
Shall hush it as a nurse her infant's cry?
His magic power let such vain boaster try,
And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
And Biscay's whirlwinds list his lullaby,
Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles' way,
And they shall heed his voice and at his bidding stay.

II

'Else ne'er to stoop till high on Lisbon's towers
They close their wings, the symbol of our yoke,
And their own sea hath whelmed yon red-cross powers!'
Thus, on the summit of Alverca's rock,
To marshal, duke, and peer Gaul's leader spoke.
While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled like Eden in her summer dress; —
Behind their wasteful march a reeking wilderness.[1]

[1] See Note 119.

III

And shall the boastful chief maintain his word,
Though Heaven hath heard the wailings of the land,
Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
Though Britons arm and WELLINGTON command?
No! grim Busaco's iron ridge shall stand
An adamantine barrier to his force;
And from its base shall wheel his shattered band,
As from the unshaken rock the torrent hoarse
Bears off its broken waves and seeks a devious course.

IV

Yet not because Alcoba's mountain-hawk
Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
In numbers confident, yon chief shall baulk
His lord's imperial thirst for spoil and blood:
For full in view the promised conquest stood,
And Lisbon's matrons from their walls might sum
The myriads that had half the world subdued,
And hear the distant thunders of the drum
That bids the bands of France to storm and havoc come.

V

Four moons have heard these thunders idly rolled,
Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,

As famished wolves survey a guarded fold —
But in the middle path a Lion lay!
At length they move — but not to battle-fray,
Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight;
Beacons of infamy, they light the way
Where cowardice and cruelty unite
To damn with double shame their ignominious flight!

VI

O triumph for the fiends of lust and wrath!
Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
What wanton horrors marked their wrackful path!
The peasant butchered in his ruined cot,
The hoary priest even at the altar shot,
Childhood and age given o'er to sword and flame,
Woman to infamy; — no crime forgot,
By which inventive demons might proclaim
Immortal hate to man and scorn of God's great name!

VII

The rudest sentinel in Britain born
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,[1]
Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer grasped his gun.
Nor with less zeal shall Britain's peaceful son
Exult the debt of sympathy to pay;

[1] See Note 120.

Riches nor poverty the tax shall shun,
Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worthless lay.

VIII

But thou — unfoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
Minion of Fortune, now miscalled in vain!
Can vantage-ground no confidence create,
Marcella's pass, not Guarda's mountain-chain?
Vainglorious fugitive,[1] yet turn again!
Behold, where, named by some prophetic seer,
Flows Honour's Fountain,[2] as foredoomed the stain
From thy dishonoured name and arms to clear —
Fallen child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour here!

IX

Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid;
Those chief that never heard the lion roar!
Within whose souls lives not a trace portrayed
Of Talavera or Mondego's shore!
Marshal each band thou hast and summon more;
Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole;
Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,
And weary out his arm — thou canst not quell his soul.

[1] See Note 121. [2] The literal translation of *Fuentes d'Honoro.*

X

O vainly gleams with steel Agueda's shore,
Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain! [1]
And what avails thee that for CAMERON slain [2]
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given?
Vengeance and grief gave mountain-rage the rein,
And, at the bloody spear-point headlong driven,
Thy despot's giant guards fled like the rack of heaven.

XI

Go, baffled boaster! teach thy haughty mood
To plead at thine imperious master's throne!
Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
Deceived his hopes and frustrated thine own;
Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown
By British skill and valour were outvied;
Last say, thy conqueror was WELLINGTON!
And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried —
God and our cause to friend, the venture we 'll abide.

XII

But you, the heroes of that well-fought day,
How shall a bard unknowing and unknown

[1] See Note 122. [2] See Note 123.

His meed to each victorious leader pay,
Or bind on every brow the laurels won?
Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave;
And he perchance the minstrel-note might own,
Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
'Mid yon far western isles that hear the Atlantic rave.

XIII

Yes! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword
To give each chief and every field its fame:
Hark! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
And red Barosa shouts for dauntless GRÆME!
O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
To bid the world re-echo to their fame!
For never upon gory battle-ground
With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver victors crowned!

XIV

O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays [1]
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Tempered their headlong rage, their courage steeled,
And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield,

[1] See Note 124.

And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,
And taught her sons forgotten arms to wield —
Shivered my harp and burst its every chord,
If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD!

XV

Not on that bloody field of battle won,
Though Gaul's proud legions rolled like mist away,
Was half his self-devoted valour shown, —
He gaged but life on that illustrious day;
But when he toiled those squadrons to array
Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
He braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame.

XVI

Nor be his praise o'erpast who strove to hide
Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
Whose wish Heaven for his country's weal denied;
Danger and fate he sought, but glory found.
From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets sound,
The wanderer went; yet, Caledonia! still
Thine was his thought in march and tented ground;
He dreamed 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill.

XVII

O hero of a race renowned of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell,
Since first distinguished in the onset bold,
Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell!
By Wallace' side it rung the Southron's knell,
Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber owned its fame,
Tummell's rude pass can of its terrors tell,
But ne'er from prouder field arose the name
Than when wild Ronda learned the conquering shout
of GRÆME![1]

XVIII

But all too long, through seas unknown and dark, —
With Spenser's parable I close my tale, —
By shoal and rock hath steered my venturous bark,
And landward now I drive before the gale.
And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
And nearer now I see the port expand,
And now I gladly furl my weary sail,
And as the prow light touches on the strand,
I strike my red-cross flag and bind my skiff to land.

[1] See Note 125.

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

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NOTES

Note 1, p. 21

The Romance of the *Morte Arthur* contains a sort of abridgement of the most celebrated adventures of the Round Table; and, being written in comparatively modern language, gives the general reader an excellent idea of what romances of chivalry actually were. It has also the merit of being written in pure old English; and many of the wild adventures which it contains, are told with a simplicity bordering upon the sublime. Several of these are referred to in the text; and I would have illustrated them by more full extracts, but as this curious work is about to be republished, I confine myself to the tale of the Chapel Perilous, and of the quest of Sir Launcelot after the Sangreal.

'Right so Sir Launcelot departed, and when he came to the Chapell Perilous, he alighted downe, and tied his horse to a little gate. And as soon as he was within the churchyard, he saw, on the front of the chapell, many faire rich shields turned upside downe; and many of the shields Sir Launcelot had seene knights have before; with that he saw stand by him thirtie great knights, more, by a yard, than any man that ever he had seene, and all those grinned and gnashed at Sir Launcelot; and when he saw their countenance, hee dread them sore, and so put his shield afore him, and tooke his sword in his hand, ready to doe battaile; and they were all armed in black harneis, ready, with their shields and swords drawen. And when Sir Launcelot would have gone through them, they scattered on every side of him, and gave him the way; and therewith he waxed all bold, and entered into the chapell, and then hee saw no light but a dimme lampe burning, and then was he ware of a corps covered with a cloath of silke; then Sir Launcelot stooped downe, and cut a piece of that cloath away, and then it fared under him as the earth had quaked a little, whereof he was afeard, and then hee

saw a faire sword lye by the dead knight, and that he gat in his hand, and hied him out of the chappell. As soon as he was in the chappell-yerd, all the knights spoke to him with a grimly voice, and said, "Knight, Sir Launcelot, lay that sword from thee, or else thou shalt die." "Whether I live or die," said Sir Launcelot, "with no great words get yee it againe, therefore fight for it and yee list." Therewith he passed through them; and, beyond the chappell-yerd, there met him a faire damosell, and said, "Sir Launcelot, leave that sword behind thee, or thou wilt die for it." "I will not leave it," said Sir Launcelot, "for no threats." "No?" said she; "and ye did leave that sword, Queen Guenever should ye never see." "Then were I a foole and I would leave this sword," said Sir Launcelot. "Now, gentle knight," said the damosell, "I require thee to kisse me once." "Nay," said Sir Launcelot, "that God forbid!" "Well, sir," said she, "and thou haddest kissed me thy life dayes had been done; but now, alas!" said she, "I have lost all my labour; for I ordeined this chappell for thy sake, and for Sir Gawaine: and once I had Sir Gawaine within it; and at that time he fought with that knight which there lieth dead in yonder chappell, Sir Gilbert the bastard, and at that time hee smote off Sir Gilbert the bastard's left hand. And so, Sir Launcelot, now I tell thee, that I have loved thee this seaven yeare; but there may no woman have thy love but Queen Guenever; but sithen I may not rejoyice thee to have thy body alive, I had kept no more joy in this world but to have had thy dead body; and I would have balmed it and served, and so have kept it in my life daies, and daily I should have clipped thee, and kissed thee, in the despite of Queen Guenever." "Yee say well," said Sir Launcelot; "Jesus preserve me from your subtill craft." And therewith he took his horse, and departed from her.'

NOTE 2, p. 22

One day, when Arthur was holding a high feast with his Knights of the Round Table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was eaten (a precious relic, which had long

remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land), suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas! it could only be revealed by a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry, and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All Sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with Queen Guenever, or Ganore; and in his holy quest he encountered only such disgraceful disasters as that which follows: —

'But Sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong in a wild forest, and held no path, but as wild adventure led him; and at the last, he came unto a stone crosse, which departed two wayes, in west land; and, by the crosse, was a stone that was of marble; but it was so dark, that Sir Launcelot might not well know what it was. Then Sir Launcelot looked by him, and saw an old chappell, and there he wend to have found people. And so Sir Launcelot tied his horse to a tree, and there he put off his shield, and hung it upon a tree, and then hee went unto the chappell doore, and found it wasted and broken. And within he found a faire altar, full richly arrayed with cloth of silk, and there stood a faire candlestick, which beare six great candles, and the candlesticke was of silver. And when Sir Launcelot saw this light, hee had a great will for to enter into the chappell, but he could find no place where hee might enter. Then was he passing heavie and dismaied. Then he returned, and came againe to his horse, and tooke off his saddle and his bridle, and let him pasture, and unlaced his helme, and ungirded his sword, and laid him downe to sleepe upon his shield, before the crosse.

'And so hee fell on sleepe; and, halfe waking and halfe sleeping, hee saw come by him two palfreys, both faire and white, the which beare a litter, therein lying a sicke knight. And when he was nigh the crosse, he there abode still. All this Sir Launcelot saw and beheld, for hee slept not verily, and hee heard him say, "O sweete Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me, and when shall the holy vessell come by me, where through I shall be blessed,

for I have endured thus long for little trespasse!" And thus a great while complained the knight, and allwaies Sir Launcelot heard it. With that Sir Launcelot saw the candlesticke, with the fire tapers, come before the crosse; but he could see no body that brought it. Also there came a table of silver, and the holy vessell of the Sancgreall, the which Sir Launcelot had seen before that time in King Petchour's house. And therewithall the sicke knight set him upright, and held up both his hands, and said, "Faire sweete Lord, which is here within the holy vessell, take heede to mee, that I may bee hole of this great malady!" And therewith upon his hands, and upon his knees, he went so nigh, that he touched the holy vessell, and kissed it: And anon he was hole, and then he said, "Lord God, I thank thee, for I am healed of this malady." Soo when the holy vessell had been there a great while, it went into the chappell againe, with the candlesticke and the light, so that Sir Launcelot wist not where it became, for he was overtaken with sinne, that hee had no power to arise against the holy vessell, wherefore afterward many men said of him shame. But he tooke repentance afterward. Then the sicke knight dressed him upright, and kissed the crosse. Then anon his squire brought him his armes, and asked his lord how he did. "Certainly," said hee, "I thanke God right heartily, for through the holy vessell I am healed: But I have right great mervaile of this sleeping knight, which hath had neither grace nor power to awake during the time that this holy vessell hath beene here present." "I dare it right well say," said the squire, "that this same knight is defouled with some manner of deadly sinne, whereof he has never confessed." "By my faith," said the knight, "whatsoever he be, he is unhappie; for, as I deeme, hee is of the fellowship of the Round Table, the which is entred into the quest of the Sancgreall." "Sir," said the squire, "here I have brought you all your armes, save your helme and your sword; and, therefore, by mine assent, now may ye take this knight's helme and his sword"; and so he did. And when he was cleane armed, he took Sir Launcelot's horse, for he was better than his owne, and so they departed from the crosse.

'Then anon Sir Launcelot awaked, and set himselfe upright, and he thought him what hee had there seene, and whether it were dreames or not; right so he heard a voice that said, "Sir Launcelot, more hardy than is the stone, and more bitter than is the wood, and more naked and bare than is the liefe of the figtree, therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place"; and when Sir Launcelot heard this, he was passing heavy, and wist not what to doe. And so he departed sore weeping, and cursed the time that he was borne; for then he deemed never to have had more worship; for the words went unto his heart, till that he knew wherefore that hee was so called.'

NOTE 3, p. 22

Dryden's melancholy account of his projected Epic Poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an *Essay on Satire*, addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the translation of Juvenal. After mentioning a plan of supplying machinery from the guardian angels of kingdoms, mentioned in the Book of Daniel, he adds —

'Thus, my lord, I have, as briefly as I could, given your lordship, and by you the world, a rude draught of what I have been long labouring in my imagination, and what I had intended to have put in practice (though far unable for the attempt of such a poem); and to have left the stage, to which my genius never much inclined me, for a work which would have taken up my life in the performance of it. This, too, I had intended chiefly for the honour of my native country, to which a poet is particularly obliged. Of two subjects, both relating to it, I was doubtful whether I should choose that of King Arthur conquering the Saxons, which, being farther distant in time, gives the greater scope to my invention; or that of Edward the Black Prince, in subduing Spain, and restoring it to the lawful prince, though a great tyrant, Don Pedro the Cruel; which, for the compass of time, including only the expedition of one year, for the greatness of the action, and its answerable event, for the magnanimity of

the English hero, opposed to the ingratitude of the person whom he restored, and for the many beautiful episodes which I had interwoven with the principal design, together with the characters of the chiefest English persons (wherein, after Virgil and Spenser, I would have taken occasion to represent my living friends and patrons of the noblest families, and also shadowed the events of future ages in the succession of our imperial line), — with these helps, and those of the machines which I have mentioned, I might perhaps have done as well as some of my predecessors, or at least chalked out a way for others to amend my errors in a like design; but being encouraged only with fair words by King Charles II, my little salary ill paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence, I was then discouraged in the beginning of my attempt; and now age has overtaken me, and want, a more insufferable evil, through the change of the times, has wholly disabled me.'

NOTE 4, p. 23

The *History of Bevis of Hampton* is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of chivalry. Ascapart, a most important personage in the romance, is thus described in an extract: —

> This geaunt was mighty and strong,
> And full thirty foot was long.
> He was bristled like a sow;
> A foot he had between each brow;
> His lips were great, and hung aside;
> His eyen were hollow, his mouth was wide;
> Lothly he was to look on than,
> And liker a devil than a man.
> His staff was a young oak,
> Hard and heavy was his stroke.
>
> *Specimens of Metrical Romances*, vol. II, p. 136.

I am happy to say, that the memory of Sir Bevis is still fragrant in his town of Southampton; the gate of which is sentineled by the effigies of that doughty knight-errant and his gigantic associate.

Note 5, p. 25

The ruinous castle of Norham (anciently called Ubbanford) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. Edward I resided there when he was created umpire of the dispute concerning the Scottish succession. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and, indeed, scarce any happened in which it had not a principal share. Norham Castle is situated on a steep bank, which overhangs the river. The repeated sieges which the castle had sustained, rendered frequent repairs necessary. In 1164, it was almost rebuilt by Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, who added a huge keep, or donjon; notwithstanding which, King Henry II, in 1174, took the castle from the bishop, and committed the keeping of it to William de Neville. After this period it seems to have been chiefly garrisoned by the King, and considered as a royal fortress. The Greys of Chillingham Castle were frequently the castellans, or captains of the garrison: yet, as the castle was situated in the patrimony of St. Cuthbert, the property was in the see of Durham till the Reformation. After that period, it passed through various hands. At the union of the crowns, it was in the possession of Sir Robert Carey (afterwards Earl of Monmouth), for his own life, and that of two of his sons. After King James's accession, Carey sold Norham Castle to George Home, Earl of Dunbar, for 6000*l.* (See his curious *Memoirs*, published by Mr. Constable of Edinburgh.)

According to Mr. Pinkerton, there is, in the British Museum, Cal. B. 6. 216, a curious memoir of the Dacres on the state of Norham Castle in 1522, not long after the battle of Flodden. The inner ward, or keep, is represented as impregnable: 'The provisions are three great vats of salt eels, forty-four kine, three hogsheads of salted salmon, forty quarters of grain, besides many cows and four hundred sheep, lying under the castle-wall

nightly; but a number of the arrows wanted feathers, and a good *Fletcher* [i.e., maker of arrows] was required.' (*History of Scotland*, vol. II, p. 201, note.)

The ruins of the castle are at present considerable, as well as picturesque. They consist of a large shattered tower, with many vaults, and fragments of other edifices, enclosed within an outward wall of great circuit.

NOTE 6, p. 25

It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached. Here, in case of the outward defences being gained, the garrison retreated to make their last stand. The donjon contained the great hall, and principal rooms of state for solemn occasions, and also the prison of the fortress; from which last circumstance we derive the modern and restricted use of the word *dungeon*. Ducange (*voce* Dunjo) conjectures plausibly, that the name is derived from these keeps being usually built upon a hill, which in Celtic is called DUN. Borlase supposes the word came from the darkness of the apartments in these towers, which were thence figuratively called Dungeons; thus deriving the ancient word from the modern application of it.

NOTE 7, p. 26

This word properly applies to a flight of water-fowl; but is applied, by analogy, to a body of horse.

> There is a knight of the North Country,
> Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears.
> *Flodden Field.*

NOTE 8, p. 28

The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury, as appears from the following passage, in which

Froissart gives an account of the preparations made by Henry, Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV, and Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marischal, for their proposed combat in the lists at Coventry: 'These two lords made ample provision of all things necessary for the combat; and the Earl of Derby sent off messengers to Lombardy, to have armour from Sir Gileas, Duke of Milan. The Duke complied with joy, and gave the knight, called Sir Francis, who had brought the message, the choice of all his armour for the Earl of Derby. When he had selected what he wished for in plated and mail armour, the Lord of Milan, out of his abundant love for the Earl, ordered four of the best armourers in Milan to accompany the knight to England, that the Earl of Derby might be more completely armed.' (Johnes' *Froissart*, vol. IV, p. 597.)

NOTE 9, p. 28

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story: Sir David de Lindsay, first Earl of Crauford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London, in 1390, by Sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at the court, he there saw Sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed in a new mantle, bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme, —

I bear a falcon, fairest of flight,
Whoso pinches at her, his death is dight [1]
In graith.[2]

The Scottish knight, being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of Sir Piers: —

I bear a pie picking at a piece,
Whoso picks at her, I shall pick at his nese,[3]
In faith.

[1] Prepared. [2] Armour. [3] Nose.

This affront could only be expiated by a just with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice: — in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the King two hundred pounds, to be forfeited if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that Sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight of Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred to this equalisation of optical powers, Dalzell demanded the forfeit; which, after much altercation, the King appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the English both in wit and valour. This must appear to the reader a singular specimen of the humour of that time. I suspect the Jockey Club would have given a different decision from Henry IV.

Note 10, p. 31

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, Lords of Fontenay, in Normandy, was highly distinguished. Robert de Marmion, Lord of Fontenay, a distinguished follower of the Conqueror, obtained a grant of the castle and town of Tamworth, and also of the manor of Scrivelby, in Lincolnshire. One, or both, of these noble possessions, was held by the honourable service of being the royal champion, as the ancestors of Marmion had formerly been to the Dukes of Normandy. But after the castle and demesne of Tamworth had passed through four successive barons from Robert, the family became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I without issue male. He was succeeded in his castle of Tamworth by Alexander de Fre-

ville, who married Mazera, his grand-daughter. Baldwin de Freville, Alexander's descendant, in the reign of Richard I, by the supposed tenure of his castle of Tamworth, claimed the office of royal champion, and to do the service appertaining; namely, on the day of coronation, to ride, completely armed, upon a barbed horse, into Westminster Hall, and there to challenge the combat against any who would gainsay the King's title. But this office was adjudged to Sir John Dymoke, to whom the manor of Scrivelby had descended by another of the co-heiresses of Robert de Marmion; and it remains in that family, whose representative is Hereditary Champion of England at the present day. The family and possessions of Freville have merged in the Earls of Ferrars. I have not, therefore, created a new family, but only revived the titles of an old one in an imaginary personage.

It was one of the Marmion family, who, in the reign of Edward II, performed that chivalrous feat before the very castle of Norham, which Bishop Percy has woven into his beautiful ballad, *The Hermit of Warkworth*. The story is thus told by Leland:—

'The Scottes came yn to the marches of England, and destroyed the castles of Werk and Herbotel, and overran much of Northumberland marches.

'At this tyme, Thomas Gray and his friendes defended Norham from the Scottes.

'It were a wonderful processe to declare, what mischefes cam by hungre and asseges by the space of xi yeres in Northumberland: for the Scottes became so proude after they had got Berwick, that they nothing esteemed the Englishmen.

'About this tyme there was a greate feste made yn Lincolnshir, to which came many gentlemen and ladies; and amonge them one lady brought a heaulme for a man of were, with a very riche creste of gold, to William Marmion, knight, with a letter of commandement of her lady, that he should go into the daungerest place in England, and ther to let the heaulme be seene and known as famous. So he went to Norham; whither, within 4 days of cumming, cam Philip Moubray, guardian of Berwicke, having

yn his bande 40 men of armes, the very flour of men of the Scottish marches.

'Thomas Gray, capitayne of Norham, seynge this, brought his garison afore the barriers of the castel, behind whom cam William, richly arrayed, as al glittering in gold, and wearing the heaulme, his lady's present.

'Then said Thomas Gray to Marmion, "Sir Knight, ye be cum hither to fame your helmet: mount up on yowr horse, and ryde lyke a valiant man to yowr foes even here at hand, and I forsake God if I rescue not thy body deade or alyve, or I myself wyl dye for it."

'Whereupon he toke his cursere, and rode among the throng of ennemyes; the which layed sore stripes on him, and pulled him at the last out of his sadel to the grounde.

'Then Thomas Gray, with al the hole garrison, lette prick yn among the Scottes, and so wondid them and their horses, that they were overthrowan; and Marmion, sore beten, was horsid agayn, and, with Gray, persewed the Scottes yn chase. There were taken 50 horse of price; and the women of Norham brought them to the foote men to follow the chase.'

Note 11, p. 32

This was the cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights. Stewart of Lorn distinguishes a ballad, in which he satirises the narrowness of James V and his courtiers, by the ironical burden —

Lerges, lerges, lerges, hay,
Lerges of this new-yeir day.
First lerges of the King, my chief,
Quhilk come als quiet as a theif,
And in my hand slid schillingis tway,[1]
To put his lergnes to the preif,[2]
For lerges of this new-yeir day.

The heralds, like the minstrels, were a race allowed to have great claims upon the liberality of the knights, of whose feats

[1] Two. [2] Proof.

they kept a record, and proclaimed them aloud, as in the text, upon suitable occasions.

At Berwick, Norham, and other Border fortresses of importance, pursuivants usually resided, whose inviolable character rendered them the only persons that could, with perfect assurance of safety, be sent on necessary embassies into Scotland. This is alluded to in stanza XXI.

NOTE 12, p. 33

Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William, for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous Lady Ford, whose siren charms are said to have cost our James IV so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry VIII on account of his share in the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the Court of Scotland, was in fact living in her own castle of Ford. (See Sir Richard Heron's curious *Genealogy of the Heron Family.)*

NOTE 13, p. 36

Lindisfarne, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the episcopal seat of the see of Durham during the early ages of British Christianity. A succession of holy men held that office: but their merits were swallowed up in the superior fame of St. Cuthbert, who was sixth bishop of Durham, and who bestowed the name of his 'patrimony' upon the extensive property of the see. The ruins of the monastery upon Holy Island betoken great antiquity. The arches are, in general, strictly Saxon; and the pillars which support them, short, strong, and massy. In some places, however, there are pointed windows, which indicate that the building has been repaired at a period long subsequent to the original foundation. The exterior orna-

ments of the building, being of a light sandy stone, have been wasted, as described in the text. Lindisfarne is not properly an island, but rather, as the Venerable Bede has termed it, a semi-isle; for, although surrounded by the sea at full tide, the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the opposite coast of Northumberland, from which it is about three miles distant.

Note 14, p. 37

The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, Duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland; and James IV, after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the Lady Catharine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions. To retaliate an invasion of England, Surrey advanced into Berwickshire at the head of considerable forces, but retreated, after taking the inconsiderable fortress of Ayton. Ford, in his *Dramatic Chronicle of Perkin Warbeck*, makes the most of this inroad: —

> Surrey.
>
> Are all our braving enemies shrunk back,
> Hid in the fogges of their distemper'd climate,
> Not daring to behold our colours wave
> In spight of this infected ayre? Can they
> Looke on the strength of Cundrestine defac't;
> The glorie of Heydonhall devasted; that
> Of Edington cast downe; the pile of Fulden
> Orethrowne: And this, the strongest of their forts,
> Old Ayton Castle, yeelded and demolished,
> And yet not peepe abroad? The Scots are bold,
> Hardie in battayle, but it seems the cause
> They undertake considered, appeares
> Unjoynted in the frame on't.

Note 15, p. 38

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland. Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington wrote a poem, called *The Blind Baron's Comfort;* when his barony of Blythe, in Lauderdale, was *harried* by Rowland Foster, the English captain of Wark, with his company, to the number

of 300 men. They spoiled the poetical knight of 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares; the whole furniture of his house of Blythe, worth 100 pounds Scots (£ 8:6:8), and everything else that was portable. 'This spoil was committed the 16th day of May, 1570 (and the said Sir Richard was threescore and fourteen years of age, and grown blind), in time of peace; when nane of that country *lippened* [expected] such a thing.' *The Blind Baron's Comfort* consists in a string of puns on the word *Blythe*, the name of the lands thus despoiled. Like John Littlewit, he had 'a conceit left him in his misery — a miserable conceit.'

The last line of the text contains a phrase, by which the Borderers jocularly intimated the burning a house. When the Maxwells, in 1685, burned the castle of Lochwood, they said they did so to give the Lady Johnstone 'light to set her hood.' Nor was the phrase inapplicable; for, in a letter, to which I have mislaid the reference, the Earl of Northumberland writes to the King and Council, that he dressed himself at midnight, at Warkworth, by the blaze of the neighbouring villages burned by the Scottish marauders.

Note 16, p. 39

This churchman seems to have been akin to Welsh, the vicar of St. Thomas of Exeter, a leader among the Cornish insurgents in 1549. 'This man,' says Holinshed, 'had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set, and mightilie compact: He was a very good wrestler; shot well, both in the long-bow, and also in the cross-bow; he handled his hand-gun and peece very well; he was a very good woodman, and a hardie, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling, or his beard for the washing. He was a companion in any exercise of activitie, and of a courteous and gentle behaviour. He descended of a good honest parentage, being borne at Peneverin, in Cornwall; and yet, in this rebellion, an arch-captain, and a principal doer.' (Vol. IV, p. 958, 4to edition.) This model of clerical talents had the misfortune to be hanged upon the steeple of his own church.

Note 17, p. 42

'Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and, when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father's house, and never was more heard of, till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built; and they affirm she was carried up there by the hands of angels; for that place was not formerly so accessible (as now it is) in the days of the Saint; and even now it is a very bad, and steepy, and break-neck way.

'In this frightful place, this holy woman lived a great many years, feeding only on what she found growing on that barren mountain, and creeping into a narrow and dreadful cleft in a rock, which was always dropping wet, and was her place of retirement, as well as prayer; having worn out even the rock with her knees, in a certain place, which is now open'd on purpose to show it to those who come here. This chapel is very richly adorn'd; and on the spot where the Saint's dead body was discover'd, which is just beneath the hole in the rock, which is open'd on purpose, as I said, there is a very fine statue of marble, representing her in a lying posture, railed in all about with fine iron and brass work; and the altar, on which they say mass, is built just over it.' (*Voyage to Sicily and Malta*, by Mr. John Dryden (son to the poet), p. 107.)

Note 18, p. 44

Friar John understood the soporific virtue of his beads and breviary, as well as his namesake in Rabelais. 'But Gargantua could not sleep by any means, on which side soever he turned himself. Whereupon the monk said to him, "I never sleep soundly but when I am at sermon or prayers: Let us therefore begin, you and I, the seven penitential psalms, to try whether

you shall not quickly fall asleep." The conceit pleased Gargantua very well; and, beginning the first of these psalms, as soon as they came to *Beati quorum*, they fell asleep, both the one and the other.'

NOTE 19, p. 44

A *Palmer*, opposed to a *Pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the Pilgrim retired to his usual home and occupations, when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage. The Palmers seem to have been the *Quæstionarii* of the ancient Scottish canons 1242 and 1296. There is in the Bannatyne MS. a burlesque account of two such persons, entitled *Simmy and his Brother*. Their accoutrements are thus ludicrously described (I discard the ancient spelling) —

Syne shaped them up, to loup on leas,
Two tabards of the tartan;
They counted nought what their clouts were
When sew'd them on, in certain.
Syne clampit up St. Peter's keys,
Made of an old red gartane;
St. James's shells, on t'other side, shews
As pretty as a partane
Toe,
On Symmye and his brother.

NOTE 20, p. 46

St. Regulus (*Scotticé*, St. Rule), a monk of Patræ, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A.D. 370, to have sailed westward, until he landed at St. Andrews, in Scotland, where he founded a chapel and tower. The latter is still standing; and, though we may doubt the precise date of its foundation, is certainly one of the most ancient edifices in Scotland. A cave, nearly fronting the ruinous castle of the Archbishops of St. Andrews, bears the name of this religious person. It is difficult of access; and the rock in which it is hewed is washed by the German Ocean. It is nearly round, about ten feet in diameter, and the same in height. On

one side is a sort of stone altar; on the other an aperture into an inner den, where the miserable ascetic, who inhabited this dwelling, probably slept. At full tide, egress and regress are hardly practicable. As Regulus first colonised the metropolitan see of Scotland, and converted the inhabitants in the vicinity, he has some reason to complain, that the ancient name of Killrule (*Cella Reguli*) should have been superseded, even in favour of the tutelar saint of Scotland. The reason of the change was, that St. Rule is said to have brought to Scotland the relics of St. Andrew.

NOTE 21, p. 46

St. Fillan was a Scottish saint of some reputation. Although Popery is, with us, matter of abomination, yet the common people still retain some of the superstitions connected with it. There are in Perthshire several wells and springs dedicated to St. Fillan, which are still places of pilgrimage and offerings, even among the Protestants. They are held powerful in cases of madness; and, in some of very late occurrence, lunatics have been left all night bound to the holy stone, in confidence that the saint would cure and unloose them before morning.

NOTE 22, p. 49

Ettrick Forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase. Since it was disparked, the wood has been, by degrees, almost totally destroyed, although, wherever protected from the sheep, copses soon arise without any planting. When the King hunted there, he often summoned the array of the country to meet and assist his sport.

Thus in 1528, James V 'made proclamation to all lords, barons, gentlemen, landward-men, and freeholders, that they should compear at Edinburgh, with a month's victuals, to pass with the King where he pleased, to danton the thieves of Tiviotdale, Annandale, Liddisdale, and other parts of that country; and also warned all gentlemen that had good dogs to bring

them, that he might hunt in the said country as he pleased: The whilk the Earl of Argyle, the Earl of Huntley, the Earl of Athole, and so all the rest of the gentlemen of the Highland, did, and brought their hounds with them in like manner, to hunt with the King, as he pleased.

'The second day of June the King past out of Edinburgh to the hunting, with many of the nobles and gentlemen of Scotland with him, to the number of twelve thousand men; and then past to Meggitland, and hounded and hawked all the country and bounds; that is to say, Crammat, Pappert-law, St. Mary-laws, Carlavirick, Chapel, Ewindoores, and Longhope. I heard say, he slew, in these bounds, eighteen score of harts.' [1]

These huntings had, of course, a military character, and attendance upon them was a part of the duty of a vassal. The act for abolishing ward or military tenures in Scotland, enumerates the services of hunting, hosting, watching, and warding, as those which were in future to be illegal.

Taylor, the water-poet, has given an account of the mode in which these huntings were conducted in the Highlands of Scotland in the seventeenth century, having been present at Bræmar upon such an occasion: —

'There did I find the truly noble and right honourable lords, John Erskine, Earl of Mar; James Stewart, Earl of Murray; George Gordon, Earl of Engye, son and heir to the Marquis of Huntley; James Erskine, Earl of Buchan; and John, Lord Erskine, son and heir to the Earl of Mar, and their Countesses, with my much honoured, and my last assured and approved friend, Sir William Murray, knight of Abercarney, and hundreds of others, knights, esquires, and their followers; all and every man, in general, in one habit, as if Lycurgus had been there, and made laws of equality; for once in the year, which is the whole month of August, and sometimes part of September, many of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom (for their pleasure) do come into these Highland countries to hunt; where they do conform themselves to the habit of the Highlandmen, who, for the

[1] Pitscottie's *History of Scotland*, folio edition, p. 143.

most part, speak nothing but Irish; and, in former time, were those people which were called the *Red-shanks*. Their habit is — shoes, with but one sole a-piece; stockings (which they call short hose), made of a warm stuff of diverse colours, which they call tartan; as for breeches, many of them, nor their forefathers, never wore any, but a jerkin of the same stuff that their hose is of; their garters being bands or wreaths of hay or straw; with a plaid about their shoulders; which is a mantle of diverse colours, much finer and lighter stuff than their hose; with blue flat caps on their heads; a handkerchief, knit with two knots, about their necks; and thus are they attired. Now their weapons are — long bowes and forked arrows, swords and targets, harquebusses, muskets, durks, and Lochaber axes. With these arms I found many of them armed for the hunting. As for their attire, any man, of what degree soever, that comes amongst them, must not disdain to wear it; for if they do, then they will disdain to hunt, or willingly to bring in their dogs; but if men be kind unto them, and be in their habit, then are they conquered with kindness, and the sport will be plentiful. This was the reason that I found so many noblemen and gentlemen in those shapes. But to proceed to the hunting: —

'My good Lord of Marr having put me into that shape, I rode with him from his house, where I saw the ruins of an old castle, called the Castle of Kindroghit. It was built by King Malcolm Canmore (for a hunting-house), who reigned in Scotland, when Edward the Confessor, Harold, and Norman William, reigned in England. I speak of it, because it was the last house I saw in those parts; for I was the space of twelve days after, before I saw either house, corn-field, or habitation for any creature, but deer, wild-horses, wolves, and such like creatures, — which made me doubt that I should never have seen a house again.

'Thus, the first day, we travelled eight miles, where there were small cottages, built on purpose to lodge in, which they call Lonquhards. I thank my good Lord Erskine, he commanded that I should always be lodged in his lodging: the kitchen being always on the side of a bank: many kettles and pots boiling, and

many spits turning and winding, with great variety of cheer, — as venison baked; sodden, rost, and stewed beef; mutton, goats, kid, hares, fresh salmon, pigeons, hens, capons, chickens, partridges, muircoots, heath-cocks, caperkellies, and termagants; good ale, sacke, white and claret, tent (or allegant), with most potent aquavitæ.

'All these, and more than these, we had continually in superfluous abundance, caught by falconers, fowlers, fishers, and brought by my lord's tenants and purveyors to victual our camp, which consisteth of fourteen or fifteen hundred men and horses.

'The manner of the hunting is this: Five or six hundred men do rise early in the morning, and they do disperse themselves divers ways, and seven, eight, or ten miles compass, they do bring, or chase in, the deer in many herds (two, three, or four hundred in a herd), to such or such a place, as the noblemen shall appoint them; then, when day is come, the lords and gentlemen of their companies do ride or go to the said places, sometimes wading up to the middles, through burns and rivers; and then, they being come to the place, do lie down on the ground, till those foresaid scouts, which are called the Tinkhell, do bring down the deer; but, as the proverb says of a bad cook, so these tinkhell men do lick their own fingers; for, besides their bows and arrows, which they carry with them, we can hear, now and then, a harquebuss or a musket go off, which they do seldom discharge in vain. Then after we had staid there three hours, or thereabouts, we might perceive the deer appear on the hills round about us, (their heads making a show like a wood,) which, being followed close by the tinkhell, are chased down into the valley where we lay; then all the valley, on each side, being way-laid with a hundred couple of strong Irish greyhounds, they are all let loose, as occasion serves, upon the herd of deer, that with dogs, guns, arrows, durks, and daggers, in the space of two hours, fourscore fat deer were slain; which after are disposed of, some one way, and some another, twenty and thirty miles, and more than enough left for us, to make merry withall, at our rendezvous.'

NOTE 23, p. 51

The tale of the Outlaw Murray, who held out Newark Castle and Ettrick Forest against the king, may be found in the *Border Minstrelsy*, vol. I. In the Macfarlane MS., among other causes of James the Fifth's charter to the burgh, is mentioned that the citizens assisted him to suppress this dangerous outlaw.

NOTE 24, p. 53

There is, on a high mountainous ridge above the farm of Ashestiel, a fosse called Wallace's Trench.

NOTE 25, p. 54

This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. In the winter, it is still frequented by flights of wild swans; hence my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines: —

> The swan on sweet St. Mary's lake
> Floats double, swan and shadow.

Near the lower extremity of the lake are the ruins of Dryhope tower, the birthplace of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow. She was married to Walter Scott of Harden, no less renowned for his depredations, than his bride for her beauty. Her romantic appellation was, in latter days, with equal justice, conferred on Miss Mary Lilias Scott, the last of the elder branch of the Harden family. The author well remembers the talent and spirit of the latter Flower of Yarrow, though age had then injured the charms which procured her the name. The words usually sung to the air of 'Tweedside,' beginning, 'What beauties does Flora disclose,' were composed in her honour.

NOTE 26, p. 55

The chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes (*de lacubus*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was

injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns; but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced; but the burial ground is still used as a cemetery. A funeral, in a spot so very retired, has an uncommonly striking effect. The vestiges of the chaplain's house are yet visible. Being in a high situation, it commanded a full view of the lake, with the opposite mountain of Bourhope, belonging, with the lake itself, to Lord Napier. On the left hand is the tower of Dryhope, mentioned in a preceding note.

Note 27, p. 56

At one corner of the burial ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts, is a small mound, called *Binram's Corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry. His story much resembles that of Ambrosio in *The Monk*, and has been made the theme of a ballad, by my friend Mr. James Hogg, more poetically designed *the Ettrick Shepherd*. To his volume, entitled *The Mountain Bard*, which contains this, and many other legendary stories and ballads of great merit, I refer the curious reader.

Note 28, p. 58

Loch-skene is a mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of the Moffat-water. The character of the scenery is uncommonly savage; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Loch-skene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height, and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the 'Grey Mare's Tail.' The 'Giant's Grave,' afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery, designed to command the pass.

Note 29, p. 60

The Abbey of Whitby, in the Archdeaconry of Cleaveland, on the coast of Yorkshire, was founded A.D. 657, in consequence of a vow of Oswy, King of Northumberland. It contained both monks and nuns of the Benedictine order; but, contrary to what was usual in such establishments, the abbess was superior to the abbot. The monastery was afterwards ruined by the Danes, and rebuilded by William Percy, in the reign of the Conqueror. There were no nuns there in Henry the Eighth's time, nor long before it. The ruins of Whitby Abbey are very magnificent.

Note 30, p. 69

The popular account of this curious service, which was probably considerably exaggerated, is thus given in *A True Account*, printed and circulated at Whitby: 'In the fifth year of the reign of Henry II, after the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy, the Lord of Uglebarnby, then called William de Bruce; the Lord of Smeaton, called Ralph de Percy; with a gentleman and freeholder called Allatson, did, on the 16th of October, 1159, appoint to meet and hunt the wild-boar, in a certain wood, or desert place, belonging to the Abbot of Whitby: the place's name was Eskdale-side; and the abbot's name was Sedman. Then, these young gentlemen being met, with their hounds, and boar-staves, in the place before mentioned, and there having found a great wild-boar, the hounds ran him well near about the chapel and hermitage of Eskdale-side, where was a monk of Whitby, who was an hermit. The boar, being very sorely pursued, and dead-run, took in at the chapel-door, there laid him down, and presently died. The hermit shut the hounds out of the chapel, and kept himself within at his meditations and prayers, the hounds standing at bay without. The gentlemen, in the thick of the wood, being just behind their game, followed the cry of their hounds, and so came to the hermitage, calling on the hermit, who opened the door, and came forth; and within they

found the boar lying dead: for which, the gentlemen, in a very great fury, because the hounds were put from their game, did most violently and cruelly run at the hermit with their boar-staves, whereby he soon after died. Thereupon the gentlemen, perceiving and knowing that they were in peril of death, took sanctuary at Scarborough: But at that time the abbot being in very great favour with the King, removed them out of the sanctuary; whereby they came in danger of the law, and not to be privileged, but likely to have the severity of the law, which was death for death. But the hermit, being a holy and devout man, and at the point of death, sent for the abbot, and desired him to send for the gentlemen who had wounded him. The abbot so doing, the gentlemen came; and the hermit, being very sick and weak, said unto them, "I am sure to die of those wounds you have given me." The abbot answered, "They shall as surely die for the same." But the hermit answered, "Not so, for I will freely forgive them my death, if they will be content to be enjoined the penance I shall lay on them for the safeguard of their souls." The gentlemen being present, bade him save their lives. Then said the hermit, "You and yours shall hold your lands of the Abbot of Whitby, and his successors, in this manner: That, upon Ascension-day, you, or some of you, shall come to the wood of the Stray-heads, which is in Eskdale-side, the same day at sun-rising, and there shall the abbot's officer blow his horn, to the intent that you may know where to find him; and he shall deliver unto you, William de Bruce, ten stakes, eleven strout stowers, and eleven yethers, to be cut by you, or some of you, with a knife of one penny price: and you, Ralph de Percy, shall take twenty-one of each sort, to be cut in the same manner; and you, Allatson, shall take nine of each sort, to be cut as aforesaid, and to be taken on your backs and carried to the town of Whitby, and to be there before nine of the clock the same day before mentioned. At the same hour of nine of the clock, if it be full sea, your labour and service shall cease; and if low water, each of you shall set your stakes to the brim, each stake one yard from the other, and so yether them on each side with your

yethers; and so stake on each side with your strout stowers, that they may stand three tides, without removing by the force thereof. Each of you shall do, make, and execute the said service, at that very hour, every year, except it be full sea at that hour; but when it shall so fall out, this service shall cease. You shall faithfully do this, in remembrance that you did most cruelly slay me; and that you may the better call to God for mercy, repent unfeignedly of your sins, and do good works. The officer of Eskdale-side shall blow, *Out on you! Out on you! Out on you!* for this heinous crime. If you, or your successors, shall refuse this service, so long as it shall not be full sea at the aforesaid hour, you or yours shall forfeit your lands to the Abbot of Whitby, or his successors. This I entreat, and earnestly beg, that you may have lives and goods preserved for this service: and I request of you to promise, by your parts in Heaven, that it shall be done by you and your successors, as is aforesaid requested; and I will confirm it by the faith of an honest man." Then the hermit said, "My soul longeth for the Lord: and I do as freely forgive these men my death, as Christ forgave the thieves on the cross." And, in the presence of the abbot and the rest, he said moreover these words: "*In manus tuos, Domine, commendo spiritum meum, a vinculis enim mortis redemisti me, Domine veritatis. Amen.*" So he yielded up the ghost the eighth day of December, anno Domini 1159, whose soul God have mercy upon. Amen.

'This service,' it is added, 'still continues to be performed with the prescribed ceremonies, though not by the proprietors in person. Part of the lands charged therewith are now held by a gentleman of the name of Herbert.'

NOTE 31, p. 70

She was the daughter of King Oswy, who, in gratitude to Heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against Penda, the pagan King of Mercia, dedicated Edelfleda, then but a year old, to the service of God, in the monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

NOTE 32, p. 70

These two miracles are much insisted upon by all ancient writers who have occasion to mention either Whitby or St. Hilda. The relics of the snakes which invested the precincts of the convent, and were, at the abbess's prayer, not only beheaded, but petrified, are still found about the rocks, and are termed by Protestant fossilists, *Ammonitæ*.

The other miracle is thus mentioned by Camden: 'It is also ascribed to the power of her sanctity, that these wild geese, which, in the winter, fly in great flocks to the lakes and rivers unfrozen in the southern parts, to the great amazement of every one, fall down suddenly upon the ground, when they are in their flight over certain neighbouring fields hereabouts: a relation I should not have made, if I had not received it from several credible men. But those who are less inclined to heed superstition, attribute it to some occult quality in the ground, and to somewhat of antipathy between it and the geese, such as they say is betwixt wolves and scyllaroots: For that such hidden tendencies and aversions, as we call sympathies and antipathies, are implanted in many things by provident Nature for the preservation of them, is a thing so evident, that every body grants it.' Mr. Charlton, in his *History of Whitby*, points out the true origin of the fable, from the number of sea-gulls that, when flying from a storm, often alight near Whitby; and from the woodcocks, and other birds of passage, who do the same upon their arrival on shore, after a long flight.

NOTE 33, p. 70

St. Cuthbert was, in the choice of his sepulchre, one of the most mutable and unreasonable saints in the Calendar. He died A.D. 688, in a hermitage upon the Farne Islands, having resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, about two years before. His body was brought to Lindisfarne, where it remained until a descent of the Danes, about 793, when the monastery was

nearly destroyed. The monks fled to Scotland, with what they deemed their chief treasure, the relics of St. Cuthbert. The Saint was, however, a most capricious fellow-traveller; which was the more intolerable, as, like Sinbad's Old Man of the Sea, he journeyed upon the shoulders of his companions. They paraded him through Scotland for several years, and came as far west as Whithern, in Galloway, whence they attempted to sail for Ireland, but were driven back by tempests. He at length made a halt at Norham; from thence he went to Melrose, where he remained stationary for a short time, and then caused himself to be launched upon the Tweed in a stone coffin, which landed him at Tilmouth, in Northumberland. This boat is finely shaped, ten feet long, three feet and a half in diameter, and only four inches thick; so that, with very little assistance, it might certainly have swam. It still lies, or at least did so a few years ago, in two pieces, beside the ruined chapel of Tilmouth. From Tilmouth, Cuthbert wandered into Yorkshire; and at length made a long stay at Chester-le-street, to which the bishop's see was transferred. At length, the Danes continuing to infest the country, the monks removed to Rippon for a season; and it was in return from thence to Chester-le-street, that, passing through a forest called Dunholme, the Saint and his carriage became immovable at a place named Wardlaw, or Wardilaw. Here the Saint chose his place of residence; and all who have seen Durham must admit, that, if difficult in his choice, he evinced taste in at length fixing it. It is said, that the Northumbrian Catholics still keep secret the precise spot of the Saint's sepulture, which is only intrusted to three persons at a time. When one dies, the survivors associate to them, in his room, a person judged fit to be the depositary of so valuable a secret.

NOTE 34, p. 72

Every one has heard, that when David I, with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136, the English host marched against them under the holy banner of St. Cuthbert; to the effi-

cacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cuton-moor. The conquerors were at least as much indebted to the jealousy and intractability of the different tribes who composed David's army; among whom, as mentioned in the text, were the Galwegians, the Britons of Strath-Clyde, the men of Teviotdale and Lothian, with many Norman and German warriors, who asserted the cause of the Empress Maud. (See Chalmers's *Caledonia*, vol. I, p. 622; a most laborious, curious, and interesting publication, from which considerable defects of style and manner ought not to turn aside the Scottish antiquary.)

Note 35, p. 72

Cuthbert, we have seen, had no great reason to spare the Danes, when opportunity offered. Accordingly, I find, in Simeon of Durham, that the Saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glastonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies; a consolation which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashendown, rewarded, by a royal offering at the shrine of the Saint. As to William the Conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the Saint. It was, however, replaced before William left the north; and, to balance accounts, the Conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the Saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that, notwithstanding there was a sumptuous dinner prepared for him, he fled without eating a morsel (which the monkish historian seems to have thought no small part both of the miracle and the penance), and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

NOTE 36, p. 72

Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *Entrochi* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St. Cuthbert's Beads. While at this task, he is supposed to sit during the night upon a certain rock, and use another as his anvil. This story was perhaps credited in former days; at least the Saint's legend contains some not more probable.

NOTE 37, p. 73

Ceolwulf, or Colwulf, King of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning; for the Venerable Bede dedicates to him his *Ecclesiastical History*. He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity. Saint as Colwulf was, however, I fear the foundation of the penance-vault does not correspond with his character; for it is recorded among his *memorabilia*, that, finding the air of the island raw and cold, he indulged the monks, whose rule had hitherto confined them to milk or water, with the comfortable privilege of using wine or ale. If any rigid antiquary insists on this objection, he is welcome to suppose the penance-vault was intended, by the founder, for the more genial purposes of a cellar.

These penitential vaults were the *Geissel-gewolbe* of German convents. In the earlier and more rigid times of monastic discipline, they were sometimes used as a cemetery for the lay benefactors of the convent, whose unsanctified corpses were then seldom permitted to pollute the choir. They also served as places of meeting for the chapter, when measures of uncommon severity were to be adopted. But their most frequent use, as implied by the name, was as places for performing penances, or undergoing punishment.

NOTE 38, p. 75

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are situated on a high rocky point; and, doubtless, many a vow was made to the shrine by the distressed mariners, who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery; for Virca, abbess of Tynemouth, presented St. Cuthbert (yet alive) with a rare winding-sheet, in emulation of a holy lady called Tuda, who had sent him a coffin. But, as in the case of Whitby, and of Holy Island, the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth, in the reign of Henry VIII, is an anachronism. The nunnery at Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St. Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment; for, notwithstanding his accepting the mortuary gifts above mentioned, and his carrying on a visiting acquaintance with the abbess of Coldingham, he certainly hated the whole female sex; and, in revenge of a slippery trick played to him by an Irish princess, he, after death, inflicted severe penances on such as presumed to approach within a certain distance of his shrine.

NOTE 39, p. 79

It is well known, that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it, and the awful words, VADE IN PACE, were the signal for immuring the criminal. It is not likely that, in latter times, this punishment was often resorted to; but, among the ruins of the abbey of Coldingham, were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which, from the shape of the niche, and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

NOTE 40, p. 95

Upon revising the Poem, it seems proper to mention that the lines, —

> Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
> Content with equity unbought:

have been unconsciously borrowed from a passage in Dryden's beautiful epistle to John Driden of Chesterton. (1808. *Note to Second Edit.*)

NOTE 41, p. 98

The accommodations of a Scottish hostelrie, or inn, in the sixteenth century, may be collected from Dunbar's admirable tale of *The Friars of Berwick*. Simon Lawder, 'the gay ostlier,' seems to have lived very comfortably; and his wife decorated her person with a scarlet kirtle, and a belt of silk and silver, and rings upon her fingers; and feasted her paramour with rabbits, capons, partridges, and Bourdeaux wine. At least, if the Scottish inns were not good, it was not for want of encouragement from the legislature; who, so early as the reign of James I, not only enacted, that in all boroughs and fairs there be hostellaries, having stables and chambers, and provision for man and horse, but by another statute, ordained that no man, travelling on horse or foot, should presume to lodge anywhere except in these hostellaries; and that no person, save innkeepers, should receive such travellers, under the penalty of forty shillings, for exercising such hospitality.[1] But, in spite of these provident enactments, the Scottish hostels are but indifferent, and strangers continue to find reception in the houses of individuals.

NOTE 42, p. 106

Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the 'dead-bell,' explained by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears

[1] James I, Parliament I, cap. 24; Parliament III, cap. 56.

which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease. He tells a story to the purpose in the *Mountain Bard*, p. 26.

Note 43, p. 111

A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford, or Yester (for it bears either name indifferently), the construction of which has from a very remote period been ascribed to magic. *The Statistical Account of the Parish of Garvald and Baro* gives the following account of the present state of this castle and apartment: 'Upon a peninsula, formed by the water of Hopes on the east, and a large rivulet on the west, stands the ancient castle of Yester. Sir David Dalrymple, in his *Annals*, relates that "Hugh Gifford de Yester died in 1267; that in his castle there was a capacious cavern, formed by magical art, and called in the country Bo-Hall, i.e., Hobgoblin Hall." A stair of twenty-four steps led down to this apartment, which is a large and spacious hall, with an arched roof; and though it hath stood for so many centuries, and been exposed to the external air for a period of fifty or sixty years, it is still as firm and entire as if it had only stood a few years. From the floor of this hall, another stair of thirty-six steps leads down to a pit which hath a communication with Hopes-water. A great part of the walls of this large and ancient castle are still standing. There is a tradition, that the castle of Yester was the last fortification, in this country, that surrendered to General Gray, sent into Scotland by Protector Somerset.' (*Statistical Account*, vol. xiii.) I have only to add, that, in 1737, the Goblin Hall was tenanted by the Marquis of Tweedale's falconer, as I learn from a poem by Boyse, entitled *Retirement* written upon visiting Yester. It is now rendered inaccessible by the fall of the stair.

Sir David Dalrymple's authority for the anecdote is in Fordun, whose words are, — 'A.D. mcclxvii. *Hugo Giffard de Yester moritur; cujus castrum, vel saltem caveam, et dongionem, arte dæmonicâ antiquæ relationes ferunt fabrifactas: nam ibidem habetur mirabilis specus subterraneus, opere mirifico constructus, magno*

terrarum spatio protelatus, qui communiter Bo-Hall *appellatus est.*' (Lib. x. cap. 21.) Sir David conjectures, that Hugh de Gifford must either have been a very wise man, or a great oppressor.

NOTE 44, p. 112

In 1263, Haco, King of Norway, came into the Frith of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2d October, by Alexander III. Haco retreated to Orkney, where he died soon after this disgrace to his arms. There are still existing, near the place of battle, many barrows, some of which, having been opened, were found, as usual, to contain bones and urns.

NOTE 45, p. 112

'Magicians, as is well known, were very curious in the choice and form of their vestments. Their caps are oval, or like pyramids, with lappets on each side, and fur within. Their gowns are long, and furred with fox-skins, under which they have a linen garment reaching to the knee. Their girdles are three inches broad, and have many cabalistical names, with crosses, trines, and circles inscribed on them. Their shoes should be of new russet leather, with a cross cut upon them. Their knives are dagger-fashion; and their swords have neither guard nor scabbard.' (See these, and many other particulars, in the *Discourse concerning Devils and Spirits*, annexed to Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665.)

NOTE 46, p. 113

'A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the magician extends towards the spirits which he invokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic.' (See the *Discourse*, etc., above mentioned, p. 66.)

Note 47, p. 114

It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on Christmas, or Good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

Note 48, p. 118

The following extract from the 'Essay upon the Fairy Superstitions,' in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. II, will show whence many of the particulars of the combat between Alexander III and the Goblin Knight are derived: —

Gervase of Tilbury (*Otia Imperial. ap. Script. rer. Brunsvic.*, vol. I, p. 797) relates the following popular story concerning a fairy knight: 'Osbert, a bold and powerful baron, visited a noble family in the vicinity of Wandlebury, in the bishopric of Ely. Among other stories related in the social circle of his friends, who, according to custom, amused each other by repeating ancient tales and traditions, he was informed, that if any knight, unattended, entered an adjacent plain by moonlight, and challenged an adversary to appear, he would be immediately encountered by a spirit in the form of a knight. Osbert resolved to make the experiment, and set out, attended by a single squire, whom he ordered to remain without the limits of the plain, which was surrounded by an ancient intrenchment. On repeating the challenge, he was instantly assailed by an adversary, whom he quickly unhorsed, and seized the reins of his steed. During this operation, his ghostly opponent sprung up, and darting his spear, like a javelin, at Osbert, wounded him in the thigh. Osbert returned in triumph with the horse, which he committed to the care of his servants. The horse was of a sable colour, as well as his whole accoutrements, and apparently of great beauty and vigour. He remained with his keeper till cock-crowing, when, with eyes flashing fire, he reared, spurned the ground, and van-

ished. On disarming himself, Osbert perceived that he was wounded, and that one of his steel boots was full of blood.' Gervase adds, that, 'as long as he lived, the scar of his wound opened afresh on the anniversary of the eve on which he encountered the spirit.' Less fortunate was the gallant Bohemian knight, who, travelling by night with a single companion, 'came in sight of a fairy host, arrayed under displayed banners. Despising the remonstrances of his friend, the knight pricked forward to break a lance with a champion, who advanced from the ranks apparently in defiance. His companion beheld the Bohemian overthrown, horse and man, by his aërial adversary; and returning to the spot next morning, he found the mangled corpses of the knight and steed.' (*Hierarchy of Blessed Angels*, p. 554.)

Besides these instances of Elfin chivalry above quoted, many others might be alleged in support of employing fairy machinery in this manner. The forest of Glenmore, in the North Highlands, is believed to be haunted by a spirit called *Lham-dearg*, in the array of an ancient warrior, having a bloody hand, from which he takes his name. He insists upon those with whom he meets doing battle with him; and the clergyman, who makes up an account of the district, extant in the Macfarlane MS., in the Advocates' Library, gravely assures us, that, in his time, *Lham-dearg* fought with three brothers whom he met in his walk, none of whom long survived the ghostly conflict. Barclay, in his *Euphormion*, gives a singular account of an officer who had ventured, with his servant, rather to intrude upon a haunted house, in a town in Flanders, than to put up with worse quarters elsewhere. After taking the usual precautions of providing fires, lights, and arms, they watched till midnight, when behold! the severed arm of a man dropped from the ceiling; this was followed by the legs, the other arm, the trunk, and the head of the body, all separately. The members rolled together, united themselves in the presence of the astonished soldiers, and formed a gigantic warrior, who defied them both to combat. Their blows, although they penetrated the body, and amputated the limbs, of their strange antagonist, had, as the reader may easily believe,

little effect on an enemy who possessed such powers of self-union; nor did his efforts make more effectual impression upon them. How the combat terminated I do not exactly remember, and have not the book by me; but I think the spirit made to the intruders on his mansion the usual proposal, that they should renounce their redemption; which being declined, he was obliged to retreat.

The most singular tale of the kind is contained in an extract communicated to me by my friend Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth, in the bishopric, who copied it from a MS. note in a copy of Burthogge *On the Nature of Spirits*, 8vo, 1694, which had been the property of the late Mr. Gill, attorney-general to Egerton, Bishop of Durham. 'It was not,' says my obliging correspondent, 'in Mr. Gill's own hand, but probably an hundred years older, and was said to be *E libro Convent. Dunelm. per T. C. extract.*, whom I believe to have been Thomas Cradocke, Esq., barrister, who held several offices under the See of Durham a hundred years ago. Mr. Gill was possessed of most of his manuscripts.' The extract, which, in fact, suggested the introduction of the tale into the present poem, runs thus: —

'*Rem miram hujusmodi quæ nostris temporibus evenit, teste viro nobili ac fide dignissimo, enarrare haud pigebit. Radulphus Bulmer, cum e castris, quæ tunc temporis prope Norham posita erant, oblectationis causa, exiisset, ac in ulteriore Tuedæ ripâ prædam cum canibus leporariis insequeretur, forte cum Scoto quodam nobili, sibi antehac, ut videbatur, familiariter cognito, congressus est; ac, ut fas erat inter inimicos, flagrante bello, brevissimâ interrogationis morâ interpositâ, alterutros invicem incitato cursu infestis animis petiere. Noster, primo occursu, equo præacerrimo hostis impetu labante, in terram eversus pectore et capite læso, sanguinem, mortuo similis, evomebat. Quem ut se ægre habentem comiter allocutus est alter, pollicitusque, modo auxilium non abnegaret, monitisque obtemperans ab omni rerum sacrarum cogitatione abstineret, nec Deo, Deiparæ Virgini, Sanctove ullo, preces aut vota efferret vel inter sese conciperet, se brevi eum sanum validumque restituturum esse. Præ angore oblata conditio accepta est; ac veterator ille nescio*

quid obscœni murmuris insusurrans, prehensa manu, dicto citius in pedes sanum ut antea sublevavit. Noster autem, maxima præ rei inauditâ novitate formidine perculsus, Mi Jesu! *exclamat, vel quid simile; ac subito respiciens nec hostem nec ullum alium conspicit, equum solum gravissimo nuper casu afflictum, per summam pacem in rivo fluvii pascentem. Ad castra itaque mirabundus revertens, fidei dubius, rem primo occultavit, dein, confecto bello, Confessori suo totam asseruit. Delusoria procul dubio res tota, ac mala veteratoris illius aperitur fraus, qua hominem Christianum ad vetitum tale auxilium pelliceret. Nomen utcunque illius (nobilis alias ac clari) reticendum duco, cum haud dubium sit quin Diabolus, Deo permittente, formam quam libuerit, immo angeli lucis, sacro oculo Dei teste, posse assumere.*' The MS. chronicle, from which Mr. Cradocke took this curious extract, cannot now be found in the Chapter Library of Durham, or, at least, has hitherto escaped the researches of my friendly correspondent.

Lindesay is made to allude to this adventure of Ralph Bulmer, as a well-known story, in the 4th canto, stanza xxii, p. 152.

The northern champions of old were accustomed peculiarly to search for, and delight in, encounters with such military spectres. (See a whole chapter on the subject, in Bartholinus, *De Causis contemptæ Mortis a Danis*, p. 253.)

Note 49, p. 127

I cannot help here mentioning, that, on the night in which these lines were written, suggested, as they were, by a sudden fall of snow, beginning after sunset, an unfortunate man perished exactly in the manner here described, and his body was next morning found close to his own house. The accident happened within five miles of the farm of Ashestiel.

Note 50, p. 129

Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet; unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His *Life of Beattie*, whom he befriended and patronised

in life, as well as celebrated after his decease, was not long published, before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend, to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of Sir William's daughters.

NOTE 51, p. 134

Alias, 'Will o' the Wisp.' This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lanthern. It is in allusion to this mischievous demon that Milton's clown speaks: —

> She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
> And he by *Friar's lanthern* led.

The History of Friar Rush is of extreme rarity, and, for some time, even the existence of such a book was doubted, although it is expressly alluded to by Reginald Scott, in his *Discovery of Witchcraft*. I have perused a copy in the valuable library of my friend Mr. Heber; and I observe, from Mr. Beloe's *Anecdotes of Literature*, that there is one in the excellent collection of the Marquis of Stafford.

NOTE 52, p. 139

The late elaborate edition of Sir David Lindesay's Works, by Mr. George Chalmers, has probably introduced him to many of my readers. It is perhaps to be regretted, that the learned editor had not bestowed more pains in elucidating his author, even although he should have omitted, or at least reserved, his disquisitions on the origin of the language used by the poet:[1] But

[1] I beg leave to quote a single instance from a very interesting passage. Sir David, recounting his attention to King James V in his infancy, is made, by the learned editor's punctuation, to say, —

> The first sillabis, that thou did mute,
> Was pa, da, lyn, upon the lute;
> Then played I twenty springis perqueir,
> Quhilk was great plesour for to hear.
> Vol. I, p. 7, 257.

Mr. Chalmers does not inform us, by note or glossary, what is meant by the

with all its faults, his work is an acceptable present to Scottish antiquaries. Sir David Lindesay was well known for his early efforts in favour of the reformed doctrines; and, indeed, his play, coarse as it now seems, must have had a powerful effect upon the people of his age. I am uncertain if I abuse poetical license, by introducing Sir David Lindesay in the character of Lion-Herald, sixteen years before he obtained that office. At any rate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism; for the author of *Flodden Field* despatches *Dallamount*, which can mean nobody but Sir David de la Mont, to France, on the message of defiance from James IV to Henry VIII. It was often an office imposed on the Lion King-at-arms, to receive foreign ambassadors; and Lindesay himself did this honour to Sir Ralph Sadler, in 1539–40. Indeed, the oath of the Lion, in its first article, bears reference to his frequent employment upon royal messages and embassies.

The office of heralds, in feudal times, being held of the utmost importance, the inauguration of the Kings-at-arms, who presided over their colleges, was proportionally solemn. In fact, it was the mimicry of a royal coronation, except that the unction was made with wine instead of oil. In Scotland, a namesake and kinsman of Sir David Lindesay, inaugurated in 1592, 'was crowned by King James with the ancient crown of Scotland, which was used before the Scottish Kings assumed a close crown'; and, on occasion of the same solemnity, dined at the King's table, wearing the crown. It is probable that the coronation of his predecessor was not less solemn. So sacred was the herald's office, that,

King '*muting pa, da, lyn, upon the lute*'; but any old woman in Scotland will bear witness, that pa, da, lyn, are the first efforts of a child to say, '*Whare's David Lindesay?*' * and that the subsequent words begin another sentence —

Upon the lute
Then played I twenty springis perqueir, etc.

In another place, 'justing lumis,' i.e., looms, or implements of tilting, is facetiously interpreted 'playful limbs.' Many such minute errors could be pointed out; but these are only mentioned incidentally, and not as diminishing the real merit of the edition.

* [It is suggested by an ingenious correspondent, that *pa, da, lyn*, ought rather to be interpreted, *play, Davy Lyndesay*.]

in 1515, Lord Drummond was by Parliament declared guilty of treason, and his lands forfeited, because he had struck, with his fist, the Lion King-at-arms, when he reproved him for his follies.[1] Nor was he restored, but at the Lion's earnest solicitation.

Note 53, p. 141

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about ten miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times, and with a very differing regard to splendour and accommodation. The oldest part of the building is a narrow keep, or tower, such as formed the mansion of a lesser Scottish baron; but so many additions have been made to it, that there is now a large court-yard, surrounded by buildings of different ages. The eastern front of the court is raised above a portico, and decorated with entablatures, bearing anchors. All the stones of this front are cut into diamond facets, the angular projections of which have an uncommonly rich appearance. The inside of this part of the building appears to have contained a gallery of great length, and uncommon elegance. Access was given to it by a magnificent stair-case, now quite destroyed. The soffits are ornamented with twining cordage and rosettes: and the whole seems to have been far more splendid than was usual in Scottish castles. The castle belonged originally to the Chancellor, Sir William Crichton, and probably owed to him its first enlargement, as well as its being taken by the Earl of Douglas, who imputed to Crichton's counsels the death of his predecessor, Earl William, beheaded in Edinburgh Castle, with his brother, in 1440. It is said to have been totally demolished on that occasion; but the present state of the ruin shows the contrary. In 1483, it was garrisoned by Lord Crichton, then its proprietor, against King James III, whose displeasure he had incurred by seducing his sister Margaret, in revenge, it is said, for the Mon-

[1] The record expresses, or rather is said to have expressed, the cause of forfeiture to be, — '*Eo quod Leonem, armorum Regem pugno violasset dum eum de ineptiis suis admonet.*' See Nisbet's *Heraldry*, part IV. chap. XVI.; and Leslæi *Historia ad Annum* 1515.

arch having dishonoured his bed. From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, Earls Bothwell; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last Earl Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the Earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton, and are now that of Sir John Callander, Baronet. It were to be wished the proprietor would take a little pains to preserve these splendid remains of antiquity, which are at present used as a fold for sheep, and wintering cattle; although, perhaps, there are very few ruins in Scotland which display so well the style and beauty of ancient castle-architecture. The castle of Crichton has a dungeon vault, called the *Massy More*. The epithet, which is not uncommonly applied to the prisons of other old castles in Scotland, is of Saracenic origin. It occurs twice in the *Epistolæ Itinerariæ* of Tollius. '*Carcer subterraneus, sive, ut Mauri appellant,* Mazmorra,' p. 147; and again, '*Coguntur omnes Captivi sub noctem in ergastula subterranea, quæ Turcæ Algezerani vocant* Mazmorras,' p. 243. The same word applies to the dungeons of the ancient Moorish castles in Spain, and serves to show from what nation the Gothic style of castle-building was originally derived.

Note 54, p. 143

He was the second Earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where, according to an ancient English poet, he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day: —

> Then on the Scottish part, right proud,
> The Earl of Bothwell then out brast,
> And stepping forth, with stomach good,
> Into the enemies' throng he thrast;
> And *Bothwell! Bothwell!* cried bold,
> To cause his souldiers to ensue,
> But there he caught a wellcome cold,
> The Englishmen straight down him threw.
> Thus Haburn through his hardy heart
> His fatal fine in conflict found, etc.
>
> *Flodden Field, a Poem*, edited by H. Weber. Edin. 1808

Note 55, p. 143

Adam was grandfather to James, Earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of Queen Mary.

Note 56, p. 144

This story is told by Pitscottie with characteristic simplicity: 'The King, seeing that France could get no support of him for that time, made a proclamation, full hastily, through all the realm of Scotland, both east and west, south and north, as well in the isles as in the firm land, to all manner of men between sixty and sixteen years, that they should be ready, within twenty days, to pass with him, with forty days' victual, and to meet at the Burrowmuir of Edinburgh, and there to pass forward where he pleased. His proclamations were hastily obeyed, contrary the Council of Scotland's will; but every man loved his prince so well, that they would on no ways disobey him; but every man caused make his proclamation so hastily, conform to the charge of the King's proclamation.

'The King came to Lithgow, where he happened to be for the time at the Council, very sad and dolorous, making his devotion to God, to send him good chance and fortune in his voyage. In this meantime, there came a man, clad in a blue gown, in at the kirk door, and belted about him in a roll of linen-cloth; a pair of brotikings[1] on his feet, to the great of his legs; with all other hose and clothes conform thereto: but he had nothing on his head, but syde[2] red yellow hair behind, and on his haffets,[3] which wan down to his shoulders; but his forehead was bald and bare. He seemed to be a man of two-and-fifty years, with a great pike-staff in his hand, and came first forward among the lords, crying and speiring[4] for the King, saying, he desired to speak with him. While, at the last, he came where the King was sitting in the desk at his prayers; but when he saw the King, he made him little reverence or salutation, but leaned down groffling on the desk before him, and said to him in this manner, as after

[1] Buskins. [2] Long. [3] Cheeks. [4] Asking.

follows: "Sir King, my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass, at this time, where thou art purposed; for if thou does, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee mell[1] with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for, if thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame."

'By this man had spoken thir words unto the King's grace, the evening-song was near done, and the King paused on thir words, studying to give him an answer; but, in the meantime, before the King's eyes, and in the presence of all the lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no ways be seen or comprehended, but vanished away as he had been a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be seen. I heard say, Sir David Lindesay, Lyon-herauld, and John Inglis the marshal, who were, at that time, young men, and special servants to the King's grace, were standing presently beside the King, who thought to have laid hands on this man, that they might have speired further tidings at him: But all for nought; they could not touch him; for he vanished away betwixt them, and was no more seen.'

Buchanan, in more elegant, though not more impressive language, tells the same story, and quotes the personal information of our Sir David Lindesay: '*In iis*, (i.e., *qui propius astiterant*) *fuit David Lindesius, Montanus, homo spectatæ fidei et probitatis, nec a literarum studiis alienus, et cujus totius vitæ tenor longissime a mentiendo aberrat; a quo nisi ego hæc uti tradidi, pro certis accepissem, ut vulgatam vanis rumoribus fabulum, omissurus eram.*' (Lib. XIII.) The King's throne, in St. Catherine's aisle, which he had constructed for himself, with twelve stalls for the Knights Companions of the Order of the Thistle, is still shown as the place where the apparition was seen. I know not by what means St. Andrew got the credit of having been the celebrated monitor of James IV; for the expression in Lindesay's narrative, 'My mother hath sent me,' could only be used by St. John, the adopted

[1] Meddle.

son of the Virgin Mary. The whole story is so well attested, that we have only the choice between a miracle or an imposture. Mr. Pinkerton plausibly argues, from the caution against incontinence, that the Queen was privy to the scheme of those who had recourse to this expedient, to deter King James from his impolitic war.

NOTE 57, p. 145

I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the Psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of bellow. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association. A gentle knight in the reign of Henry VIII, Sir Thomas Wortley, built Wantley Lodge, in Wancliffe Forest, for the pleasure (as an ancient inscription testifies) of 'listening to the hart's *bell*.'

NOTE 58, p. 145

The rebellion against James III was signalised by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in the hostile army. When the King saw his own banner displayed against him, and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he had ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV, after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel-royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. (See a following note on stanza IX of canto v.) The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III fell, was fought 18th June, 1488.

NOTE 59, p. 154

The Borough, or Common Moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills. It was anciently a forest; and, in that

state, was so great a nuisance, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted to them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber; which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV mustered the array of the kingdom there, in 1513, the Borough Moor was, according to Hawthornden, 'a field spacious, and delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks.' Upon that, and similar occasions, the royal standard is traditionally said to have been displayed from the Hare Stane, a high stone, now built into the wall, on the left hand of the highway leading towards Braid, not far from the head of Burntsfield Links. The Hare Stane probably derives its name from the British word *Har*, signifying an army.

NOTE 60, p. 156

Seven culverins so called, cast by one Borthwick.

NOTE 61, p. 156

Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

NOTE 62, p. 156

I do not exactly know the Scottish mode of encampment in 1513, but Patten gives a curious description of that which he saw after the battle of Pinkey, in 1547: 'Here now, to say somewhat of the manner of their camp: As they had no pavilions, or round houses, of any commendable compass, so wear there few other tentes with posts, as the used manner of making is; and of these few also, none of above twenty foot length, but most far under; for the most part all very sumptuously beset, (after their fashion,) for the love of France, with fleur-de-lys, some of blue buckeram, some of black, and some of some other colours. These white ridges, as I call them, that, as we stood on Fauxsyde Bray, did make so great muster toward us, which I did take then to be a number of tentes, when we came, we

found it a linen drapery, of the coarser cambryk in dede, for it was all of canvas sheets, and wear the tenticles, or rather cabyns and couches of their soldiers; the which (much after the common building of their country beside) had they framed of four sticks, about an ell long a piece, whearof two fastened together at one end aloft, and the two endes beneath stuck in the ground, an ell asunder, standing in fashion like the bowes of a sowes yoke; over two such bowes (one, as it were, at their head, the other at their feet) they stretched a sheet down on both sides, whereby their cabin became roofed like a ridge, but skant shut at both ends, and not very close beneath on the sides, unless their sticks were the shorter, or their wives the more liberal to lend them larger napery; howbeit, when they had lined them, and stuff'd them so thick with straw, with the weather as it was not very cold, when they wear ones couched, they were as warm as they had been wrapt in horses dung.' (Patten's *Account of Somerset's Expedition.*)

NOTE 63, p. 157

The well-known arms of Scotland. If you will believe Boethius and Buchanan, the double tressure round the shield (mentioned, p. 139), *counter fleur-de-lysed, or lingued and armed azure,* was first assumed by Achaius, King of Scotland, contemporary of Charlemagne, and founder of the celebrated League with France; but later antiquaries make poor Eochy, or Achy, little better than a sort of King of Brentford, whom old Grig (who has also swelled into Gregorius Magnus) associated with himself in the important duty of governing some part of the north-eastern coast of Scotland.

NOTE 64, p. 163

The Old Town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake, now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of

the city. My ingenious and valued friend, Mr. Thomas Campbell, proposed to celebrate Edinburgh under the epithet here borrowed. But the 'Queen of the North' has not been so fortunate as to receive from so eminent a pen the proposed distinction.

NOTE 65, p. 164

Since writing this line, I find I have inadvertently borrowed it almost verbatim, though with somewhat a different meaning, from a chorus in *Caractacus:* —

Britain heard the descant bold,
She flung her white arms o'er the sea,
Proud in her leafy bosom to enfold
The freight of harmony.

NOTE 66, p. 166

Henry VI, with his Queen, his heir, and the chiefs of his family, fled to Scotland after the fatal battle of Towton. In this note a doubt was formerly expressed, whether Henry VI came to Edinburgh, though his Queen certainly did; Mr. Pinkerton inclining to believe that he remained at Kirkcudbright. But my noble friend, Lord Napier, has pointed out to me a grant by Henry, of an annuity of forty marks to his Lordship's ancestor, John Napier, subscribed by the King himself, *at Edinburgh*, the 28th day of August, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, which corresponds to the year of God, 1461. This grant, Douglas, with his usual neglect of accuracy, dates in 1368. But this error being corrected from the copy in Macfarlane's MS., p. 119, 20, removes all scepticism on the subject of Henry VI being really at Edinburgh. John Napier was son and heir of Sir Alexander Napier, and about this time was Provost of Edinburgh. The hospitable reception of the distressed monarch and his family, called forth on Scotland the encomium of Molinet, a contemporary poet. The English people, he says, —

Ung nouveau roy créerent,
Par despiteux vouloir,
Le vieil en deboutérent,
Et son legitime hoir.

Qui fuytyf alla prendre
D'Escossé le garand,
De tous siécles le mendre,
Et le plus tollerant.
Recollection des Avantures.

NOTE 67, p. 167

Mr. Ellis, in his valuable Introduction to the *Specimens of Romance*, has proved, by the concurring testimony of La Ravaillere, Tressan, but especially the Abbé de la Rue, that the courts of our Anglo-Norman Kings, rather than those of the French monarch, produced the birth of Romance literature. Marie, soon after mentioned, compiled from Armorican originals, and translated into Norman-French, or romance language, the twelve curious Lays, of which Mr. Ellis has given us a *precis* in the Appendix to his Introduction. The story of Blondel, the famous and faithful minstrel of Richard I, needs no commentary.

NOTE 68, p. 170

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were actually used. Thus, at the battle of Blackheath, between the troops of Henry VII, and the Cornish insurgents, in 1496, the bridge of Dartford was defended by a picked band of archers from the rebel army, 'whose arrows,' says Holinshed, 'were in length a full cloth yard.' The Scottish, according to Ascham, had a proverb, that every English archer carried under his belt twenty-four Scots, in allusion to his bundle of unerring shafts.

NOTE 69, p. 171

'The most useful *air*, as the Frenchmen term it, is *territerr;* the *courbettes, cabrioles*, or *un pas et un sault*, being fitter for horses of parade and triumph than for soldiers: yet I cannot deny but a *demivolte* with *courbettes*, so that they be not too high, may be useful in a fight or *meslee;* for, as Labroue hath it, in his *Book of Horsemanship*, Monsieur de Montmorency having a horse

that was excellent in performing the *demivolte*, did, with his sword, strike down two adversaries from their horses in a tourney, where divers of the prime gallants of France did meet; for, taking his time, when the horse was in the height of his *courbette*, and discharging a blow then, his sword fell with such weight and force upon the two cavaliers, one after another, that he struck them from their horses to the ground.' (*Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life*, p. 48.)

Note 70, p. 171

The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen, appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100: their armour to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats*, i.e., bright steel caps, without crest or visor. By an act of James IV their *weapon-schawings* are appointed to be held four times a year, under the aldermen or bailiffs.

Note 71, p. 172

Bows and quivers were in vain recommended to the peasantry of Scotland, by repeated statutes; spears and axes seem universally to have been used instead of them. Their defensive armour was the plate-jack, hauberk, or brigantine; and their missile weapons crossbows and culverins. All wore swords of excellent temper, according to Patten; and a voluminous handkerchief round their neck, 'not for cold, but for cutting.' The mace also was much used in the Scottish army: The old poem on the battle of Flodden mentions a band —

> Who manfully did meet their foes,
> With leaden mauls, and lances long.

When the feudal array of the kingdom was called forth, each man was obliged to appear with forty days' provision. When this was expended, which took place before the battle of Flodden, the army melted away of course. Almost all the Scottish forces,

except a few knights, men-at-arms, and the Border-prickers, who formed excellent light-cavalry, acted upon foot.

Note 72, p. 176

In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was a uniform and indispensable preliminary. It was not to Sir John Falstaff alone that such an introductory preface was necessary, however well judged and acceptable on the part of Mr. Brook: for Sir Ralph Sadler, while on an embassy to Scotland in 1539–40, mentions, with complacency, 'the same night came Rothesay (the herald so called) to me again, and brought me wine from the King, both white and red.' (Sadler's *State Papers*, Clifford's Edition, p. 39.)

Note 73, p. 180

Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which James added certain ounces every year that he lived. Pitscottie founds his belief, that James was not slain in the battle of Flodden, because the English never had this token of the iron belt to show to any Scottishman. The person and character of James are delineated according to our best historians. His romantic disposition, which led him highly to relish gaiety, approaching to license, was, at the same time, tinged with enthusiastic devotion. These propensities sometimes formed a strange contrast. He was wont, during his fits of devotion, to assume the dress, and conform to the rules, of the order of Franciscans; and when he had thus done penance for some time in Stirling, to plunge again into the tide of pleasure. Probably, too, with no unusual inconsistency, he sometimes laughed at the superstitious observances to which he at other times subjected himself. There is a very singular poem by Dunbar, seemingly addressed to James IV, on one of these occasions of monastic seclusion. It is a most daring and profane parody on the services of the Church of Rome, entitled: —

Dunbar's Dirige to the King,
Byding ower lang in Striviling.

We that are here, in heaven's glory,
To you that are in Purgatory,
Commend us on our hearty wise;
I mean we folks in Paradise,
In Edinburgh, with all merriness,
To you in Stirling, with distress,
Where neither pleasure nor delight is,
For pity this epistle wrytis, etc.

(See the whole in Sibbald's *Collection*, vol. I, p. 234.)

NOTE 74, p. 180

It has been already noticed [see note to stanza XIII of canto I] that King James's acquaintance with Lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the King's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden. The author of *The Genealogy of the Heron Family* endeavours, with laudable anxiety, to clear the Lady Ford from this scandal: that she came and went, however, between the armies of James and Surrey, is certain. (See Pinkerton's *History*, and the authorities he refers to, vol. II, p. 99.) Heron of Ford had been, in 1511, in some sort accessory to the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford, Warden of the Middle Marches. It was committed by his brother the bastard, Lilburn, and Starked, three Borderers. Lilburn, and Heron of Ford, were delivered up by Henry to James, and were imprisoned in the fortress of Fastcastle, where the former died. Part of the pretence of Lady Ford's negotiations with James was the liberty of her husband.

NOTE 75, p. 181

'Also the Queen of France wrote a love-letter to the King of Scotland, calling him her love, showing him that she had suffered much rebuke in France for the defending of his honour. She believed surely that he would recompense her again with some of his kingly support in her necessity; that is to say, that he would raise her an army, and come three foot of ground on

English ground, for her sake. To that effect she sent him a ring off her finger, with fourteen thousand French crowns to pay his expenses.' (Pitscottie, p. 110.) A turquoise ring; probably this fatal gift is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the College of Heralds, London.

Note 76, p. 183

The ballad of *Lochinvar* is in a very slight degree founded on a ballad called *Katharine Janfarie*, which may be found in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

Note 77, p. 187

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-Cat*, upon the following remarkable occasion: James the Third, of whom Pitscottie complains, that he delighted more in music, and 'policies of building,' than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised, as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathise in the King's respect for the fine arts, were extremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochrane, a mason, who had been created Earl of Mar; and, seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the King had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the King's person. When all had agreed on the propriety of this measure, Lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the Mice, who had formed a resolution, that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat's neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance; but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. 'I understand the moral,' said Angus, 'and, that what we propose may not lack

execution, I will *bell the cat*.' The rest of the strange scene is thus told by Pitscottie: —

'By this was advised and spoken by thir lords aforesaid, Cochran, the Earl of Mar, came from the King to the council, (which council was holden in the kirk of Lauder for the time,) who was well accompanied with a band of men of war, to the number of three hundred light axes, all clad in white livery, and black bends thereon, that they might be known for Cochran the Earl of Mar's men. Himself was clad in a riding-pie of black velvet, with a great chain of gold about his neck, to the value of five hundred crowns, and four blowing horns, with both the ends of gold and silk, set with a precious stone, called a berryl, hanging in the midst. This Cochran had his heumont born before him, overgilt with gold, and so were all the rest of his horns, and all his pallions were of fine canvas of silk, and the cords thereof fine twined silk, and the chains upon his pallions were double overgilt with gold.

'This Cochran was so proud in his conceit, that he counted no lords to be marrows to him, therefore he rushed rudely at the kirk-door. The council enquired who it was that perturbed them at that time. Sir Robert Douglas, Laird of Lochleven, was keeper of the kirk-door at that time, who enquired who that was that knocked so rudely? and Cochran answered, "This is I, the Earl of Mar." The which news pleased well the lords, because they were ready boun to cause take him, as is before rehearsed. Then the Earl of Angus past hastily to the door, and with him Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, there to receive in the Earl of Mar, and so many of his complices who were there, as they thought good. And the Earl of Angus met with the Earl of Mar, as he came in at the door, and pulled the golden chain from his craig, and said to him, a tow[1] would set him better. Sir Robert Douglas syne pulled the blowing horn from him in like manner, and said, "He had been the hunter of mischief over long." This Cochran asked, "My lords, is it mows,[2] or earnest?" They answered, and said, "It is good earnest, and so thou shalt find; for

[1] Rope. [2] Jest.

thou and thy complices have abused our prince this long time; of whom thou shalt have no more credence, but shalt have thy reward according to thy good service, as thou hast deserved in times bypast; right so the rest of thy followers."

'Notwithstanding, the lords held them quiet till they caused certain armed men to pass into the King's pallion, and two or three wise men to pass with them, and give the King fair pleasant words, till they laid hands on all the King's servants, and took them and hanged them before his eyes over the bridge of Lawder. Incontinent they brought forth Cochran, and his hands bound with a tow, who desired them to take one of his own pallion tows and bind his hands, for he thought shame to have his hands bound with such tow of hemp, like a thief. The lords answered, he was a traitor, he deserved no better; and, for despight, they took a hair tether,[1] and hanged him over the bridge of Lawder, above the rest of his complices.' (Pitscottie, p. 78, folio edit.)

NOTE 78, p. 187

Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely upon the impolicy of fighting, that the King said to him, with scorn and indignation, 'if he was afraid, he might go home.' The Earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons, George, Master of Angus, and Sir William of Glenbervie, to command his followers. They were both slain in the battle, with two hundred gentlemen of the name of Douglas. The aged Earl, broken-hearted at the calamities of his house and his country, retired into a religious house, where he died about a year after the field of Flodden.

NOTE 79, p. 188

The ruins of Tantallon Castle occupy a high rock projecting into the German Ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick.

[1] Halter.

The building is not seen till a close approach, as there is rising ground betwixt it and the land. The circuit is of large extent, fenced upon three sides by the precipice which overhangs the sea, and on the fourth by a double ditch and very strong outworks. Tantallon was a principal castle of the Douglas family, and when the Earl of Angus was banished, in 1527, it continued to hold out against James V. The King went in person against it, and for its reduction, borrowed from the Castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the Duke of Albany, two great cannons, whose names, as Pitscottie informs us with laudable minuteness, were 'Thrawn-mouth'd Meg and her Marrow'; also, 'two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons'; for the safe guiding and re-delivery of which, three lords were laid in pawn at Dunbar. Yet, notwithstanding all this apparatus, James was forced to raise the siege, and only afterwards obtained possession of Tantallon by treaty with the governor, Simon Panango. When the Earl of Angus returned from banishment, upon the death of James, he again obtained possession of Tantallon, and it actually afforded refuge to an English ambassador, under circumstances similar to those described in the text. This was no other than the celebrated Sir Ralph Sadler, who resided there for some time under Angus's protection, after the failure of his negotiation for matching the infant Mary with Edward VI. He says, that though this place was poorly furnished, it was of such strength as might warrant him against the malice of his enemies, and that he now thought himself out of danger.[1]

There is a military tradition, that the old Scottish March was meant to express the words,

> Ding down Tantallon,
> Mak a brig to the Bass.

Tantallon was at length 'dung down' and ruined by the Covenanters; its lord, the Marquis of Douglas, being a favourer of the royal cause. The castle and barony were sold in the begin-

[1] The very curious *State Papers* of this able negotiator were, in 1810, published by Mr. Clifford, with some notes by the Author of *Marmion*.

ning of the eighteenth century to President Dalrymple of North Berwick, by the then Marquis of Douglas.

Note 80, p. 188

A very ancient sword, in possession of Lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a heart, which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the Good Lord Douglas to carry his heart to the Holy Land. The following lines (the first couplet of which is quoted by Godscroft as a popular saying in his time) are inscribed around the emblem: —

So mony guid as of ye Dovglas beinge,
Of ane surname was ne'er in Scotland seine.

I will ye charge, efter yat I depart,
To holy grawe, and thair bury my hart;
Let it remane ever BOTHE TYME AND HOWR,
To ye last day I sie my Saviour.

I do protest intyme of al my ringe,
Ye lyk subject had never ony keing.

This curious and valuable relic was nearly lost during the Civil War of 1745–46, being carried away from Douglas Castle by some of those in arms for Prince Charles. But great interest having been made by the Duke of Douglas among the chief partisans of the Stuart, it was at length restored. It resembles a Highland claymore, of the usual size, is of an excellent temper, and admirably poised.

Note 81, p. 194

A German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy with Lambert Simnel. He was defeated and killed at Stokefield. The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor. There were songs about him long current in England. (See Dissertation prefixed to Ritson's *Ancient Songs*, 1792, p. lxi.)

Note 82, p. 195

It was early necessary for those who felt themselves obliged to believe in the divine judgment being enunciated in the trial by duel, to find salvos for the strange and obviously precarious chances of the combat. Various curious evasive shifts, used by those who took up an unrighteous quarrel, were supposed sufficient to convert it into a just one. Thus, in the romance of *Amys and Amelion*, the one brother-in-arms, fighting for the other, disguised in his armour, swears that *he* did not commit the crime of which the Steward, his antagonist, truly, though maliciously, accused him whom he represented. Brantôme tells a story of an Italian, who entered the lists upon an unjust quarrel, but, to make his cause good, fled from his enemy at the first onset. 'Turn, coward!' exclaimed his antagonist. 'Thou liest,' said the Italian, 'coward am I none; and in this quarrel will I fight to the death, but my first cause of combat was unjust, and I abandon it.' '*Je vous laisse à penser*,' adds Brantôme, '*s'il n'y a pas de l'abus là*.' Elsewhere he says, very sensibly, upon the confidence which those who had a righteous cause entertained of victory: '*Un autre abus y avoit-il, que ceux qui avoient un juste sujet de querelle, et qu'on les faisoit jurer avant entrer au camp, pensoient estre aussitost vainqueurs, voire s'en assuroient-t-ils du tout, mesmes que leurs confesseurs, parrains et confidants leurs en respondoient tout-à-fait, comme si Dieu leur en eust donné une patente ; et ne regardant point à d'autres fautes passées, et que Dieu en garde la punition à ce coup là pour plus grande, despiteuse, et exemplaire*.' (*Discours sur les Duels.*)

Note 83, p. 199

The Cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. At each angle there was a pillar, and between them an arch, of the Grecian shape. Above these was a projecting battlement, with a turret at each corner, and medallions, of rude but curious workmanship, between them. Above

this rose the proper Cross, a column of one stone, upwards of twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. This pillar is preserved in the grounds of the property of Drum, near Edinburgh. The Magistrates of Edinburgh, in 1756, with consent of the Lords of Session (*proh pudor!*), destroyed this curious monument, under a wanton pretext that it encumbered the street; while, on the one hand, they left an ugly mass called the Luckenbooths, and, on the other, an awkward, long, and low guard-house, which were fifty times more encumbrance than the venerable and inoffensive Cross.

From the tower of the Cross, so long as it remained, the heralds published the acts of Parliament; and its site, marked by radii, diverging from a stone centre, in the High Street, is still the place where proclamations are made.

NOTE 84, p. 200

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was, probably, like the apparition at Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV. The following account from Pitscottie is characteristically minute, and furnishes, besides, some curious particulars of the equipment of the army of James IV. I need only add to it, that Plotcock, or Plutock, is no other than Pluto. The Christians of the middle ages by no means misbelieved in the existence of the heathen deities; they only considered them as devils;[1] and Plotcock, so far from implying anything fabulous, was a synonyme of the grand enemy of mankind. 'Yet all thir warnings, and uncouth tidings, nor no good counsel, might stop the King, at this present, from his vain purpose, and wicked enterprise, but hasted him fast to Edinburgh, and there

[1] See, on this curious subject, the 'Essay on Fairies,' in the *Border Minstrelsy*, vol. II, under the fourth head; also Jackson *On Unbelief*, p. 175. Chaucer calls Pluto the 'King of Faerie'; and Dunbar names him, 'Pluto, that elrich incubus.' If he was not actually the devil, he must be considered as the 'prince of the power of the air.' The most remarkable instance of these surviving classical superstitions is that of the Germans concerning the Hill of Venus, into which she attempts to entice all gallant knights, and detains them there in a sort of Fools' Paradise.

to make his provision and furnishing, in having forth of his army against the day appointed, that they should meet in the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh: That is to say, seven cannons that he had forth of the Castle of Edinburgh, which were called the Seven Sisters, casten by Robert Borthwick, the master-gunner, with other small artillery, bullet, powder, and all manner of order, as the master-gunner could devise.

'In this meantime, when they were taking forth their artillery, and the King being in the Abbey for the time, there was a cry heard at the Market Cross of Edinburgh, at the hour of midnight, proclaiming as it had been a summons, which was named and called by the proclaimer thereof, The Summons of Plotcock; which desired all men to compear, both Earl, and Lord, and Baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town (every man specified by his own name), to compear, within the space of forty days, before his master, where it should happen him to appoint, and be for the time, under the pain of disobedience. But whether this summons was proclaimed by vain persons, night-walkers, or drunken men, for their pastime, or if it was a spirit, I cannot tell truly; but it was shewn to me, that an indweller of the town, Mr. Richard Lawson, being evil disposed, ganging in his gallery-stair foreanent the Cross, hearing this voice proclaiming this summons, thought marvel what it should be, cried on his servant to bring him his purse; and when he had brought him it, he took out a crown, and cast over the stair, saying, "I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and takes me all whole in the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus his son." Verily, the author of this, that caused me write the manner of this summons, was a landed gentleman, who was at that time twenty years of age, and was in the town the time of the said summons; and thereafter, when the field was stricken, he swore to me, there was no man that escaped that was called in this summons, but that one man alone which made his protestation, and appealed from the said summons; but all the lave were perished in the field with the King.'

Note 85, p. 204

The convent alluded to is a foundation of Cistertian nuns, near North Berwick, of which there are still some remains. It was founded by Duncan, Earl of Fife, in 1216.

Note 86, p. 207

This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of King Stephen, whom William of Newbury describes with some attributes of my fictitious hero: '*Homo bellicosus, ferocia, et astucia, fere nullo suo tempore impar.*' This baron, having expelled the monks from the church of Coventry, was not long of experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks, no doubt, termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the Earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop, against a body of the Earl's followers: the rider's thigh being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour. The whole story is told by William of Newbury.

Note 87, p. 213

The Iol of the heathen Danes (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland) was solemnised with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones; and Torfæus tells a long and curious story, in the *History of Hrolfe Kraka*, of one Hottus, an inmate of the Court of Denmark, who was so generally assailed with these missiles, that he constructed, out of the bones with which he was overwhelmed, a very respectable intrenchment against those who continued the raillery. The dances of the northern warriors round the great fires of pine-trees are commemorated by Olaus Magnus, who says, they danced with such fury, holding each other by the hands, that, if the grasp of any failed, he was pitched into the fire with the velocity of a sling. The sufferer, on such occasions, was instantly plucked out, and obliged to

quaff off a certain measure of ale, as a penalty for 'spoiling the king's fire.'

NOTE 88, p. 214

In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, except on Christmas Eve. Each of the frolics with which that holyday used to be celebrated, might admit of a long and curious note; but I shall content myself with the following description of Christmas, and his attributes, as personified in one of Ben Jonson's Masques for the Court:—

'*Enter* CHRISTMAS, *with two or three of the Guard.* He is attired in round hose, long stockings, a close doublet, a high-crowned hat, with a brooch, a long thin beard, a truncheon, little ruffs, white shoes, his scarfs and garters tied cross, and his drum beaten before him. *The names of his children, with their attires: Miss-Rule*, in a velvet cap, with a sprig, a short cloak, great yellow ruff, like a reveller; his torch-bearer bearing a rope, a cheese, and a basket; *Carroll*, a long tawny coat, with a red cap, and a flute at his girdle; his torch-bearer carrying a song-book open; *Minc'd Pie*, like a fine cook's wife, drest neat, her man carrying a pie, dish, and spoons; *Gamboll*, like a tumbler, with a hoop and bells; his torch-bearer arm'd with cole-staff, and blinding cloth; *Post and Pair*, with a pair-royal of aces in his hat, his garment all done over with pairs and purs; his squire carrying a box, cards, and counters; *New Year's Gift*, in a blue coat, serving-man like, with an orange, and a sprig of rosemary gilt on his head, his hat full of brooches, with a collar of gingerbread; his torch-bearer carrying a march-pain, with a bottle of wine on either arm; *Mumming*, in a masquing pied suit, with a visor; his torch-bearer carrying the box, and ringing it; *Wassal*, like a neat sempster and songster; her page bearing a brown bowl, drest with ribbands, and rosemary, before her; *Offering*, in a short gown, with a porter's staff in his hand; a wyth borne before him, and a bason, by his torch-bearer; *Baby Cocke*, drest like a boy, in a fine long coat, biggin, bib,

muckender, and a little dagger; his usher bearing a great cake, with a bean and a pease.'

NOTE 89, p. 216

It seems certain that the *Mummers* of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old Mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland (*me ipso teste*), we were wont, during my boyhood, to take the characters of the apostles, at least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours' plum-cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes; another was

> . . . . Alexander, King of Macedon,
> Who conquer'd all the world but Scotland alone,
> When he came to Scotland his courage grew cold,
> To see a little nation courageous and bold.

These, and many such verses, were repeated, but by rote, and unconnectedly. There was also, occasionally, I believe, a Saint George. In all, there was a confused resemblance of the ancient Mysteries, in which the characters of Scripture, the Nine Worthies, and other popular personages, were usually exhibited. It were much to be wished that the Chester Mysteries were published from the MS. in the Musuem, with the annotations which a diligent investigator of popular antiquities might still supply. The late acute and valuable antiquary, Mr. Ritson, showed me several memoranda towards such a task, which are probably now dispersed or lost. (See, however, his *Remarks on Shakespeare*, 1783, p. 38.)

Since the first edition of *Marmion* appeared, this subject has received much elucidation from the learned and extensive labours of Mr. Douce; and the Chester Mysteries have been printed in a style of great elegance and accuracy (in 1818), by Bensley and Sons, London, for the Roxburghe Club. [1830.]

NOTE 90, p. 216

Mr. Scott of Harden, my kind and affectionate friend, and distant relation, has the original of a poetical invitation, addressed from his grandfather to my relative, from which a few lines in the text are imitated. They are dated, as the epistle in the text, from Mertoun House, the seat of the Harden family.

> " With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
> And reverend apostolic air,
> Free of anxiety and care,
> Come hither, Christmas-day, and dine;
> We'll mix sobriety with wine,
> And easy mirth with thoughts divine.
> We Christians think it holiday,
> On it no sin to feast or play;
> Others, in spite, may fast and pray.
> No superstition in the use
> Our ancestors made of a goose;
> Why may not we, as well as they,
> Be innocently blithe that day,
> On goose or pie, on wine or ale,
> And scorn enthusiastic zeal? —
> Pray come, and welcome, or plague rott
> Your friend and landlord, Walter Scott.
>
> *Mr. Walter Scott, Lessuden.*

The venerable gentleman, to whom the lines are addressed, was the younger brother of William Scott of Raeburn. Being the cadet of a cadet of the Harden family, he had very little to lose; yet he contrived to lose the small property he had, by engaging in the civil wars and intrigues of the house of Stuart. His veneration for the exiled family was so great, that he swore he would not shave his beard till they were restored: a mark of attachment, which, I suppose, had been common during Cromwell's usurpation; for, in Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street*, one drunken cavalier upbraids another, that, when he was not able to afford to pay a barber, he affected to 'wear a beard for the King.' I sincerely hope this was not absolutely the original reason of my ancestor's beard; which, as appears from a portrait in the possession of Sir Henry Hay Macdougal, Bart., and another painted

for the famous Dr. Pitcairn,[1] was a beard of a most dignified and venerable appearance.

NOTE 91, p. 219

I am permitted to illustrate this passage, by inserting *Ceubren yr Ellyll*, or *The Spirit's Blasted Tree*, a legendary tale, by the Reverend George Warrington: —

'The event, on which this tale is founded, is preserved by tradition in the family of the Vaughans of Hengwyrt; nor is it entirely lost, even among the common people, who still point out this oak to the passenger. The enmity between the two Welsh chieftains, Howel Sele, and Owen Glendwr, was extreme, and marked by vile treachery in the one, and ferocious cruelty in the other.[2] The story is somewhat changed and softened, as more favourable to the character of the two chiefs, and as better answering the purpose of poetry, by admitting the passion of pity, and a greater degree of sentiment in the description. Some trace of Howel Sele's mansion was to be seen a few years ago, and may perhaps be still visible, in the park of Nannau, now belonging to Sir Robert Vaughan, Baronet, in the wild and romantic tracks of Merionethshire. The abbey mentioned passes under two names, Vener and Cymmer. The former is retained, as more generally used.

THE SPIRIT'S BLASTED TREE

Ceubren yr Ellyll

Through Nannau's Chase as Howel pass'd,
A chief esteem'd both brave and kind,
Far distant borne, the stag-hounds' cry
Came murmuring on the hollow wind.

Starting, he bent an eager ear, —
How should the sounds return again?
His hounds lay wearied from the chase,
And all at home his hunter train.

[1] The old gentleman was an intimate of this celebrated genius. By the favour of he late Earl of Kellie, descended on the maternal side from Dr. Pitcairn, my ather became possessed of the portrait in question.

[2] The history of their feud may be found in Pennant's *Tour in Wales*.

Then sudden anger flash'd his eye,
And deep revenge he vow'd to take,
On that bold man who dared to force
His red-deer from the forest brake.

Unhappy Chief! would nought avail,
No signs impress thy heart with fear,
Thy lady's dark mysterious dream,
Thy warning from the hoary seer?

Three ravens gave the note of death,
As through mid air they wing'd their way;
Then o'er his head, in rapid flight,
They croak, — they scent their destined prey.

Ill-omen'd bird! as legends say,
Who hast the wondrous power to know,
While health fills high the throbbing veins,
The fated hour when blood must flow.

Blinded by rage, alone he pass'd,
Nor sought his ready vassals' aid:
But what his fate lay long unknown,
For many an anxious year delay'd.

A peasant mark'd his angry eye,
He saw him reach the lake's dark bourne,
He saw him near a Blasted Oak,
But never from that hour return.

Three days pass'd o'er, no tidings came; —
Where should the Chief his steps delay?
With wild alarm the servants ran,
Yet knew not where to point their way.

His vassals ranged the mountain's height,
The covert close, the wide-spread plain;
But all in vain their eager search,
They ne'er must see their lord again.

Yet Fancy, in a thousand shapes,
Bore to his home the Chief once more:
Some saw him on high Moal's top,
Some saw him on the winding shore.

With wonder fraught the tale went round,
Amazement chain'd the hearer's tongue:
Each peasant felt his own sad loss,
Yet fondly o'er the story hung.

Oft by the moon's pale shadowy light,
His aged nurse and steward grey
Would lean to catch the storied sounds,
Or mark the flitting spirit stray.

Pale lights on Cader's rocks were seen,
And midnight voices heard to moan;
'T was even said the Blasted Oak,
Convulsive, heaved a hollow groan:

And to this day the peasant still,
With cautious fear, avoids the ground;
In each wild branch a spectre sees,
And trembles at each rising sound.

Ten annual suns had held their course,
In summer's smile, or winter storm;
The lady shed the widow'd tear,
As oft she traced his manly form.

Yet still to hope her heart would cling,
As o'er the mind illusions play, —
Of travel fond, perhaps her lord
To distant lands had steer'd his way.

'T was now November's cheerless hour,
Which drenching rains and clouds deface
Dreary bleak Robell's tract appear'd,
And dull and dank each valley's space.

Loud o'er the weir the hoarse flood fell,
And dash'd the foaming spray on high;
The west wind bent the forest tops,
And angry frown'd the evening sky.

A stranger pass'd Llanelltid's bourne,
His dark-grey steed with sweat besprent
Which, wearied with the lengthen'd way,
Could scarcely gain the hill's ascent.

The portal reach'd, — the iron bell
Loud sounded round the outward wall;
Quick sprang the warder to the gate,
To know what meant the clam'rous call.

'O! lead me to your lady soon;
Say, — it is my sad lot to tell,
To clear the fate of that brave knight,
She long has proved, she loved so well.'

Then, as he cross'd the spacious hall,
The menials look surprise and fear;
Still o'er his harp old Modred hung,
And touch'd the notes for grief's worn ear.

The lady sat amidst her train;
A mellow'd sorrow mark'd her look:
Then, asking what his mission meant,
The graceful stranger sigh'd and spoke: —

'O could I spread one ray of hope,
One moment raise thy soul from woe,
Gladly my tongue would tell its tale,
My words at ease unfetter'd flow!

'Now, lady, give attention due,
The story claims thy full belief:
E'en in the worst events of life,
Suspense removed is some relief.

'Though worn by care, see Madoc here,
Great Glyndwr's friend, thy kindred's foe;
Ah, let his name no anger raise,
For now that mighty Chief lies low.

'E'en from the day, when, chain'd by fate,
By wizard's dream, or potent spell,
Lingering from sad Salopia's field,
'Reft of *his* aid the Percy fell; —

'E'en from that day misfortune still,
As if for violated faith,
Pursued him with unwearied step;
Vindictive still for Hotspur's death.

'Vanquish'd at length, the Glyndwr fled
Where winds the Wye her devious flood;
To find a casual shelter there,
In some lone cot, or desert wood.

'Clothed in a shepherd's humble guise,
He gain'd by toil his scanty bread;
He who had Cambria's sceptre borne,
And her brave sons to glory led!

'To penury extreme, and grief,
The Chieftain fell a lingering prey;
I heard his last few faltering words,
Such as with pain I now convey.

'"To Sele's sad widow bear the tale,
Nor let our horrid secret rest;
Give but *his* corse to sacred earth,
Then may my parting soul be blest."—

'Dim wax'd the eye that fiercely shone,
And faint the tongue that proudly spoke,
And weak that arm, still raised to me,
Which oft had dealt the mortal stroke.

'How could I *then* his mandate bear?
Or how his last behest obey?
A rebel deem'd, with him I fled;
With him I shunn'd the light of day.

'Proscribed by Henry's hostile rage,
My country lost, despoil'd my land,
Desperate, I fled my native soil,
And fought on Syria's distant strand.

'O, had thy long-lamented lord
The holy cross and banner view'd,
Died in the sacred cause! who fell
Sad victim of a private feud!

'Led by the ardour of the chase,
Far distant from his own domain,
From where Garthmaelan spreads her shades,
The Glyndwr sought the opening plain.

'With head aloft, and antlers wide,
A red buck roused then cross'd in view:
Stung with the sight, and wild with rage,
Swift from the wood fierce Howel flew.

'With bitter taunt, and keen reproach,
He, all impetuous, pour'd his rage;
Reviled the Chief as weak in arms,
And bade him loud the battle wage.

'Glyndwr for once restrain'd his sword,
And, still averse, the fight delays;
But soften'd words, like oil to fire,
Made anger more intensely blaze.

'They fought; and doubtful long the fray!
The Glyndwr gave the fatal wound! —
Still mournful must my tale proceed,
And its last act all dreadful sound.

'How could we hope for wish'd retreat,
His eager vassals ranging wide,
His bloodhounds' keen sagacious scent,
O'er many a trackless mountain tried?

'I mark'd a broad and Blasted Oak,
Scorch'd by the lightning's livid glare;
Hollow its stem from branch to root,
And all its shrivell'd arms were bare.

'Be this, I cried, his proper grave! —
(The thought in me was deadly sin),
Aloft we raised the hapless Chief,
And dropp'd his bleeding corpse within.'

A shriek from all the damsels burst,
That pierced the vaulted roofs below;
While horror-struck the Lady stood,
A living form of sculptured woe.

With stupid stare, and vacant gaze,
Full on his face her eyes were cast,
Absorb'd! — she lost her present grief,
And faintly thought of things long past.

Like wild-fire o'er a mossy heath,
The rumour through the hamlet ran;
The peasants crowd at morning dawn,
To hear the tale — behold the man.

He led them near the Blasted Oak,
Then, conscious, from the scene withdrew:
The peasants work with trembling haste,
And lay the whiten'd bones to view! —

Back they recoil'd! — the right hand still,
Contracted, grasp'd a rusty sword;
Which erst in many a battle gleam'd,
And proudly deck'd their slaughter'd lord.

They bore the corse to Vener's shrine,
With holy rites and prayers address'd;
Nine white-robed monks the last dirge sang,
And gave the angry spirit rest.

NOTE 92, p. 219

The *Daoine shi'*, or *Men of Peace*, of the Scottish Highlanders, rather resemble the Scandinavian *Duergar*, than the English Fairies. Notwithstanding their name, they are, if not absolutely malevolent, at least peevish, discontented, and apt to do mischief on slight provocation. The belief of their existence is deeply impressed on the Highlanders, who think they are particularly offended at mortals, who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom, in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power. Some curious particulars concerning the popular superstitions of the Highlanders may be found in Dr. Graham's *Picturesque Sketches of Perthshire*.

Note 93, p. 219

The journal of the friend, to whom the Fourth Canto of the poem is inscribed, furnished me with the following account of a striking superstition: —

'Passed the pretty little village of Franchémont (near Spaw), with the romantic ruins of the old castle of the Counts of that name. The road leads through many delightful vales, on a rising ground; at the extremity of one of them stands the ancient castle, now the subject of many superstitious legends. It is firmly believed by the neighbouring peasantry, that the last Baron of Franchémont deposited, in one of the vaults of the castle, a ponderous chest, containing an immense treasure in gold and silver, which, by some magic spell, was intrusted to the care of the Devil, who is constantly found sitting on the chest in the shape of a huntsman. Any one adventurous enough to touch the chest is instantly seized with the palsy. Upon one occasion, a priest of noted piety was brought to the vault: he used all the arts of exorcism to persuade his infernal majesty to vacate his seat, but in vain; the huntsman remained immovable. At last, moved by the earnestness of the priest, he told him, that he would agree to resign the chest, if the exorciser would sign his name with blood. But the priest understood his meaning, and refused, as by that act he would have delivered over his soul to the Devil. Yet if anybody can discover the mystic words used by the person who deposited the treasure, and pronounce them, the fiend must instantly decamp. I had many stories of a similar nature from a peasant, who had himself seen the Devil, in the shape of a great cat.'

Note 94, p. 227

'I shall only produce one instance more of the great veneration paid to Lady Hilda, which still prevails even in these our days; and that is, the constant opinion, that she rendered, and still renders, herself visible, on some occasions, in the Abbey of Streanshalh, or Whitby, where she so long resided. At a particu-

lar time of the year (viz., in the summer months) at ten or eleven in the forenoon, the sunbeams fall in the inside of the northern part of the choir; and 't is then that the spectators, who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard, so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey pass the north end of Whitby church, imagine they perceive, in one of the highest windows there, the resemblance of a woman, arrayed in a shroud. Though we are certain this is only a reflection caused by the splendour of the sunbeams, yet fame reports it, and it is constantly believed, among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in a glorified state; before which, I make no doubt, the Papists, even in these our days, offer up their prayers with as much zeal and devotion, as before any other image of their most glorified saint.' (Charlton's *History of Whitby*, p. 33.)

NOTE 95, p. 236

The well-known Gawain Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, son of Archibald Bell-the-Cat, Earl of Angus. He was author of a Scottish metrical version of the *Æneid*, and of many other poetical pieces of great merit. He had not at this period attained the mitre.

NOTE 96, p. 236

Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage. Spens of Kilspindie, a favourite of James IV, having spoken of him lightly, the Earl met him while hawking, and, compelling him to single combat, at one blow cut asunder his thigh-bone, and killed him on the spot. But ere he could obtain James's pardon for this slaughter, Angus was obliged to yield his castle of Hermitage, in exchange for that of Bothwell, which was some diminution to the family greatness. The sword with which he struck so remarkable a blow, was presented by his descendant, James, Earl of Morton, afterwards Regent of Scotland, to Lord Lindesay of the Byres, when he defied Bothwell to single combat on Carberry Hill. (See Introduction to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.)

NOTE 97, p. 240

This ebullition of violence in the potent Earl of Angus is not without its example in the real history of the house of Douglas, whose chieftains possessed the ferocity, with the heroic virtues, of a savage state. The most curious instance occurred in the case of Maclellan, Tutor of Bombay, who, having refused to acknowledge the preëminence claimed by Douglas over the gentlemen and Barons of Galloway, was seized and imprisoned by the Earl, in his castle of the Thrieve, on the borders of Kirkcudbrightshire. Sir Patrick Gray, commander of King James the Second's guard, was uncle to the Tutor of Bombay, and obtained from the King a 'sweet letter of supplication,' praying the Earl to deliver his prisoner into Gray's hand. When Sir Patrick arrived at the castle, he was received with all the honour due to a favourite servant of the King's household; but while he was at dinner, the Earl, who suspected his errand, caused his prisoner to be led forth and beheaded. After dinner, Sir Patrick presented the King's letter to the Earl, who received it with great affectation of reverence; 'and took him by the hand, and led him forth to the green, where the gentleman was lying dead, and showed him the manner, and said, "Sir Patrick, you are come a little too late; yonder is your sister's son lying, but he wants the head: take his body, and do with it what you will." — Sir Patrick answered again, with a sore heart, and said, "My lord, if ye have taken from him his head, dispone upon the body as ye please"; and with that called for his horse, and leaped thereon; and when he was on horseback, he said to the Earl on this manner, "My lord, if I live, you shall be rewarded for your labours, that you have used at this time, according to your demerits."

'At this saying the Earl was highly offended, and cried for horse. Sir Patrick, seeing the Earl's fury, spurred his horse, but he was chased near Edinburgh ere they left him; and had it not been his led horse was so tried and good, he had been taken.' (Pitscottie's *History*, p. 39.)

NOTE 98, p. 241

Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment, and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward IV to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs.

NOTE 99, p. 244

This was a Cistertian house of religion, now almost entirely demolished. Lennel House is now the residence of my venerable friend, Patrick Brydone, Esquire, so well known in the literary world.[1] It is situated near Coldstream, almost opposite to Cornhill, and consequently very near to Flodden Field.

NOTE 100, p. 246

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's headquarters were at Barmoor Wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden Hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September, 1513, Surrey marched in a northwesterly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel Bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between King James and his supplies from Scotland, and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But

[1] First Edition. — Mr. Brydone has been many years dead. [1825.]

as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage while struggling with these natural obstacles. I know not if we are to impute James's forbearance to want of military skill, or to the romantic declaration which Pitscottie puts in his mouth, 'that he was determined to have his enemies before him on a plain field,' and therefore would suffer no interruption to be given, even by artillery, to their passing the river.

The ancient bridge of Twisel, by which the English crossed the Till, is still standing beneath Twisel Castle, a splendid pile of Gothic architecture, as now rebuilt by Sir Francis Blake, Bart., whose extensive plantations have so much improved the country around. The glen is romantic and delightful, with steep banks on each side, covered with copse, particularly with hawthorn. Beneath a tall rock, near the bridge, is a plentiful fountain, called St. Helen's Well.

Note 101, p. 250

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the battle of Flodden; but, so far as is necessary to understand the romance, I beg to remind him, that, when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between King James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other, when, according to the old poem of 'Flodden Field,'—

> The English line stretch'd east and west,
> And southward were their faces set;
> The Scottish northward proudly prest,
> And manfully their foes they met.

The English army advanced in four divisions. On the right, which first engaged, were the sons of Earl Surrey, namely, Thomas Howard, the Admiral of England, and Sir Edmund,

the Knight Marshal of the army. Their divisions were separated from each other; but, at the request of Sir Edmund, his brother's battalion was drawn very near to his own. The centre was commanded by Surrey in person; the left wing by Sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Lancashire, and of the palatinate of Chester. Lord Dacres, with a large body of horse, formed a reserve. When the smoke, which the wind had driven between the armies, was somewhat dispersed, they perceived the Scots, who had moved down the hill in a similar order of battle, and in deep silence.[1] The Earls of Huntley and of Home commanded their left wing, and charged Sir Edmund Howard with such success, as entirely to defeat his part of the English right wing. Sir Edmund's banner was beaten down, and he himself escaped with difficulty to his brother's division. The Admiral, however, stood firm; and Dacre advancing to his support with the reserve of cavalry, probably between the interval of the divisions commanded by the brothers Howard, appears to have kept the victors in effectual check. Home's men, chiefly Borderers, began to pillage the baggage of both armies; and their leader is branded, by the Scottish historians, with negligence or treachery. On the other hand, Huntley, on whom they bestow many encomiums, is said, by the English historians, to have left the field after the first charge. Meanwhile the Admiral, whose flank these chiefs ought to have attacked, availed himself of their inactivity, and pushed forward against another large division of the Scottish army in his front, headed by the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, both of whom were slain, and their forces routed. On the left, the success of the English was yet more decisive; for the Scottish right wing, consisting of undisciplined Highlanders, commanded by Lennox and Argyle, was unable to sustain the charge of Sir Edward Stanley, and especially the severe execution of the Lancashire archers. The King and Surrey, who commanded the respective centres of their armies, were meanwhile engaged in close and dubious conflict. James, surrounded by the flower of his king-

[1] '*Lesquelz Escossois descendirent la montaigne en bonne ordre, en la maniere que marchent les Allemans sans parler, ne faire aucun bruit.*' ('Gazette of the Battle,' Pinkerton's *History*, Appendix, vol. II, p. 456.)

dom, and impatient of the galling discharge of arrows, supported also by his reserve under Bothwell, charged with such fury that the standard of Surrey was in danger. At that critical moment, Stanley, who had routed the left wing of the Scottish, pursued his career of victory, and arrived on the right flank, and in the rear of James's division, which, throwing itself into a circle, disputed the battle till night came on. Surrey then drew back his forces; for the Scottish centre not having been broken, and their left wing being victorious, he yet doubted the event of the field. The Scottish army, however, felt their loss, and abandoned the field of battle in disorder, before dawn. They lost, perhaps, from eight to ten thousand men; but that included the very prime of their nobility, gentry, and even clergy. Scarce a family of eminence but has an ancestor killed at Flodden; and there is no province in Scotland, even at this day, where the battle is mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow. The English lost also a great number of men, perhaps within one-third of the vanquished, but they were of inferior note. (See the only distinct detail of the field of Flodden in Pinkerton's *History*, book XI; all former accounts being full of blunders and inconsistency.)

The spot from which Clara views the battle must be supposed to have been on a hillock commanding the rear of the English right wing, which was defeated, and in which conflict Marmion is supposed to have fallen.

NOTE 102, p. 252

Sir Brian Tunstall, called, in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the Undefiled, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden. He figures in the ancient English poem, to which I may safely refer my readers; as an edition, with full explanatory notes, has been published by my friend, Mr. Henry Weber. Tunstall, perhaps, derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner, the latter bearing a white cock, about to crow, as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland Castle.

NOTE 103, p. 266

There can be no doubt that King James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French *Gazette*, within a lance's length of the Earl of Surrey; and the same account adds, that none of his division were made prisoners, though many were killed; a circumstance that testifies the desperation of their resistance. The Scottish historians record many of the idle reports which passed among the vulgar of their day. Home was accused, by the popular voice, not only of failing to support the King, but even of having carried him out of the field, and murdered him. And this tale was revived in my remembrance, by an unauthenticated story of a skeleton, wrapped in a bull's hide, and surrounded with an iron chain, said to have been found in the well of Home Castle; for which, on enquiry, I could never find any better authority, than the sexton of the parish having said, that, *if the well were cleaned out, he would not be surprised at such a discovery*. Home was the chamberlain of the King, and his prime favourite; he had much to lose (in fact did lose all) in consequence of James's death, and nothing earthly to gain by that event: but the retreat, or inactivity, of the left wing, which he commanded, after defeating Sir Edmund Howard, and even the circumstance of his returning unhurt, and loaded with spoil, from so fatal a conflict, rendered the propagation of any calumny against him easy and acceptable. Other reports gave a still more romantic turn to the King's fate, and averred, that James, weary of greatness after the carnage among his nobles, had gone on a pilgrimage, to merit absolution for the death of his father, and the breach of his oath of amity to Henry. In particular, it was objected to the English, that they could never show the token of the iron belt; which, however, he was likely enough to have laid aside on the day of battle, as encumbering his personal exertions. They produce a better evidence, the monarch's sword and dagger, which are still preserved in the Heralds' College in London. Stowe has recorded a degrading story of the disgrace with which the remains of the unfortunate monarch

were treated in his time. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell, still called the King's Stone.

Note 104, p. 267

This storm of Lichfield Cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the King, took place in the Great Civil War. Lord Brook, who, with Sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the vizor of his helmet. The royalists remarked, that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's Cathedral, and upon St. Chad's Day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. The magnificent church in question suffered cruelly upon this, and other occasions; the principal spire being ruined by the fire of the besiegers.

Note 105, p. 278

This locality may startle those readers who do not recollect that much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the northwest of England, and southwest of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattraeth, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed by the learned Dr. Leyden to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick Forest. It is known to the English reader by the paraphrase of Gray, beginning, —

> Had I but the torrent's might,
> With headlong rage and wild affright, etc.

But it is not so generally known that the champions, mourned in this beautiful dirge, were the British inhabitants of Edinburgh, who were cut off by the Saxons of Deiria, or Northumberland, about the latter part of the sixth century. (Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, edition 1799, vol. I, p. 222.) Llywarch, the celebrated bard and monarch, was Prince of Argood, in Cumberland; and his youthful exploits were performed

upon the Border, although in his age he was driven into Powys by the successes of the Anglo-Saxons. As for Merlin Wyllt, or the Savage, his name of Caledonia, and his retreat into the Caledonian wood, appropriate him to Scotland. Fordun dedicates the thirty-first chapter of the third book of his *Scoto-Chronicon*, to a narration of the death of this celebrated bard and prophet near Drumelzier, a village upon Tweed, which is supposed to have derived its name (*quasi Tumulus Merlini*) from the event. The particular spot in which he is buried is still shown, and appears, from the following quotation, to have partaken of his prophetic qualities: 'There is one thing remarkable here, which is, that the burn called Pausayl runs by the east side of this churchyard into the Tweed; at the side of which burn, a little below the churchyard, the famous prophet Merlin is said to be buried. The particular place of his grave, at the root of a thorn-tree, was shown me, many years ago, by the old and reverend minister of the place, Mr. Richard Brown; and here was the old prophecy fulfilled, delivered in Scots rhyme, to this purpose:—

> When Tweed and Pausayl meet at Merlin's grave,
> Scotland and England shall one Monarch have.

For, the same day that our King James the Sixth was crowned King of England, the river Tweed, by an extraordinary flood, so far overflowed its banks, that it met and joined with the Pausayl at the said grave, which was never before observed to fall out.' (Pennycuick's *Description of Tweeddale.* Edin. 1715, vol. IV, p. 26.)

NOTE 106, p. 280

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire. A copious fountain upon the ridge of Minchmore, called the Cheesewell, is supposed to be sacred to these fanciful spirits, and it was customary to propitiate them by throwing in something upon passing it. A pin was the usual oblation; and the ceremony is still sometimes practised, though rather in jest than earnest.

Note 107, p. 280

The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people. It is mentioned by Baretti and other travellers.

Note 108, p. 281

Over a name sacred for ages to heroic verse, a poet may be allowed to exercise some power. I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprise the Southern reader of its legitimate sound; — Grahame being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a dissyllable.

Note 109, p. 284

Almost all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, ascribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's principal lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, Count Julian forgot the duties of a Christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the Caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors. Voltaire, in his General History, expresses his doubts of this popular story, and Gibbon gives him some countenance; but the universal tradition is quite sufficient for the purposes of poetry. The Spaniards, in detestation of Florinda's memory, are said, by Cervantes, never to bestow that

name upon any human female, reserving it for their dogs. Nor is the tradition less inveterate among the Moors, since the same author mentions a promontory on the coast of Barbary, called 'The Cape of the Caba Rumia, which, in our tongue, is the Cape of the Wicked Christian Woman; and it is a tradition among the Moors, that Caba, the daughter of Count Julian, who was the cause of the loss of Spain, lies buried there, and they think it ominous to be forced into that bay; for they never go in otherwise than by necessity.'

Note 110, p. 285

The predecessor of Roderick upon the Spanish throne, and slain by his connivance, as is affirmed by Rodriguez of Toledo, the father of Spanish history.

Note 111, p. 287

The transition of an incident from history to tradition, and from tradition to fable and romance, becoming more marvellous at each step from its original simplicity, is not ill exemplified in the account of the 'Fated Chamber' of Don Roderick, as given by his namesake, the historian of Toledo, contrasted with subsequent and more romantic accounts of the same subterranean discovery. I give the Archbishop of Toledo's tale in the words of Nonius, who seems to intimate (though very modestly) that the *fatale palatium*, of which so much had been said, was only the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre.

'Extra muros, septentrionem versus, vestigia magni olim theatri sparsa visuntur. Auctor est Rodericus, Toletanus Archiepiscopus ante Arabum in Hispanias irruptionem, hic *fatale palatium* fuisse; quod invicti vectes æterna ferri robora claudebant, ne reseratum Hispaniæ excidium adferret; quod in fatis non vulgus solum, sed et prudentissimi quique credebant. Sed Roderici ultimi Gothorum Regis animum infelix curiositas subiit, sciendi quid sub tot vetitis claustris observaretur; ingentes ibi superiorum regum opes et arcanos thesauros servari ratus.

Seras et pessulos perfringi curat, invitis omnibus; nihil præter arculam repertum, et in ea linteum, quo explicato novæ et insolentes hominum facies habitusque apparuere, cum inscriptione Latina, *Hispaniæ excidium ab illa gente imminere;* Vultus habitusque Maurorum erant. Quamobrem ex Africa tantam cladem instare regi cæterisque persuasum; nec falso ut Hispaniæ annales etiamnum queruntur.' (*Hispania Ludovic. Nonij*, cap. LIX.)

But, about the term of the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, we find, in the *Historia Verdadeyra del Rey Don Rodrigo*, a (pretended) translation from the Arabic of the sage Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique, a legend which puts to shame the modesty of the historian Roderick, with his chest and prophetic picture. The custom of ascribing a pretended Moorish original to these legendary histories, is ridiculed by Cervantes, who affects to translate the *History of the Knight of the Woful Figure* from the Arabic of the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli. As I have been indebted to the *Historia Verdadeyra* for some of the imagery employed in the text, the following literal translation from the work itself may gratify the inquisitive reader: —

'One mile on the east side of the city of Toledo, among some rocks, was situated an ancient tower, of a magnificent structure, though much dilapidated by time, which consumes all: four estadoes (i.e., four times a man's height) below it, there was a cave with a very narrow entrance, and a gate cut out of the solid rock, lined with a strong covering of iron, and fastened with many locks; above the gate some Greek letters are engraved, which, although abbreviated, and of doubtful meaning, were thus interpreted, according to the exposition of learned men: "The King who opens this cave, and can discover the wonders, will discover both good and evil things." Many Kings desired to know the mystery of this tower, and sought to find out the manner with much care: but when they opened the gate, such a tremendous noise arose in the cave, that it appeared as if the earth was bursting; many of those present sickened with fear, and others lost their lives. In order to prevent such great perils (as they sup-

posed a dangerous enchantment was contained within), they secured the gate with new locks, concluding, that, though a King was destined to open it, the fated time was not yet arrived. At last King Don Rodrigo, led on by his evil fortune and unlucky destiny, opened the tower; and some bold attendants, whom he had brought with him, entered, although agitated with fear. Having proceeded a good way, they fled back to the entrance, terrified with a frightful vision which they had beheld. The King was greatly moved, and ordered many torches, so contrived that the tempest in the cave could not extinguish them, to be lighted. Then the King entered, not without fear, before all the others. They discovered, by degrees, a splendid hall, apparently built in a very sumptuous manner; in the middle stood a bronze statue of very ferocious appearance, which held a battle-axe in its hands. With this he struck the floor violently, giving it such heavy blows, that the noise in the cave was occasioned by the motion of the air. The King, greatly affrighted and astonished, began to conjure this terrible vision, promising that he would return without doing any injury in the cave, after he had obtained a sight of what was contained in it. The statue ceased to strike the floor, and the King, with his followers, somewhat assured, and recovering their courage, proceeded into the hall; and on the left of the statue they found this inscription on the wall, "Unfortunate King! thou hast entered here in evil hour." On the right side of the wall these words were inscribed, "By strange nations thou shalt be dispossessed, and thy subjects foully degraded." On the shoulders of the statue other words were written, which said, "I call upon the Arabs." And upon his breast was written, "I do my office." At the entrance of the hall there was placed a round bowl, from which a great noise, like the fall of waters, proceeded. They found no other thing in the hall; and when the King, sorrowful and greatly affected, had scarcely turned about to leave the cavern, the statue again commenced its accustomed blows upon the floor. After they had mutually promised to conceal what they had seen, they again closed the tower, and blocked up the gate of the cavern with

earth, that no memory might remain in the world of such a portentous and evil-boding prodigy. The ensuing midnight they heard great cries and clamour from the cave, resounding like the noise of battle, and the ground shaking with a tremendous roar: the whole edifice of the old tower fell to the ground, by which they were greatly affrighted, the vision which they had beheld appearing to them as a dream.

'The King having left the tower, ordered wise men to explain what the inscriptions signified; and having consulted upon and studied their meaning, they declared that the statue of bronze, with the motion which it made with its battle-axe, signified Time; and that its office, alluded to in the inscription on its breast, was, that he never rests a single moment. The words on the shoulders, "I call upon the Arabs," they expounded, that, in time, Spain would be conquered by the Arabs. The words upon the left wall signified the destruction of King Rodrigo; those on the right, the dreadful calamities which were to fall upon the Spaniards and Goths, and that the unfortunate King would be dispossessed of all his states. Finally, the letters on the portal indicated that good would betide to the conquerors, and evil to the conquered, of which experience proved the truth.' (*Historia Verdadeyra del Rey Don Rodrigo.* Quinta impresión, Madrid, 1654, IV, p. 23.)

Note 112, p. 291

The Tecbir (derived from the words *Alla acbar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens. It is celebrated by Hughes in the *Siege of Damascus:* —

> We heard the Tecbir; so these Arabs call
> Their shout of onset, when, with loud appeal,
> They challenge Heaven, as if demanding conquest.

The *Lelie*, well known to the Christians during the Crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahomedan confession of faith. It is twice used in poetry by my friend Mr. W. Stewart Rose, in the *Romance of Partenopex*, and in the *Crusade of St. Lewis*.

Note 113, p. 291

Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, Archbishop of Toledo, invited, in 713, the Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif, who bequeathed the well-known name of Gibraltar (*Gibel al Tarik*, or the mountain of Tarik) to the place of his landing. He was joined by Count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714, they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army, to give them battle. The field was chosen near Xeres, and Mariana gives the following account of the action: —

'Both armies being drawn up, the King, according to the custom of the Gothic kings when they went to battle, appeared in an ivory chariot, clothed in cloth of gold, encouraging his men; Tarif, on the other side, did the same. The armies, thus prepared, waited only for the signal to fall on; the Goths gave the charge, their drums and trumpets sounding, and the Moors received it with the noise of kettle-drums. Such were the shouts and cries on both sides, that the mountains and valleys seemed to meet. First, they began with slings, darts, javelins, and lances, then came to the swords; a long time the battle was dubious; but the Moors seemed to have the worst, till D. Oppas, the archbishop, having to that time concealed his treachery, in the heat of the fight, with a great body of his followers, went over to the infidels. He joined Count Julian, with whom was a great number of Goths, and both together fell upon the flank of our army. Our men, terrified with that unparalleled treachery, and tired with fighting, could no longer sustain that charge, but were easily put to flight. The King performed the part not only of a wise general, but of a resolute soldier, relieving the weakest, bringing on fresh men in place of those that were tired, and stopping those that turned their backs. At length, seeing no hopes left, he alighted out of his chariot for fear of being taken, and mounting on a horse, called Orelia, he withdrew out of the battle. The Goths,

who still stood, missing him, were most part put to the sword, the rest betook themselves to flight. The camp was immediately entered, and the baggage taken. What number was killed is not known: I suppose they were so many it was hard to count them; for this single battle robbed Spain of all its glory, and in it perished the renowned name of the Goths. The King's horse, upper garment, and buskins, covered with pearls and precious stones, were found on the bank of the river Guadelite, and there being no news of him afterwards, it was supposed he was drowned passing the river.' (Mariana's *History of Spain*, book VI, chap. 9.)

Orelia, the courser of Don Roderick, mentioned in the text, and in the above quotation, was celebrated for her speed and form. She is mentioned repeatedly in Spanish romance, and also by Cervantes.

NOTE 114, p. 297

The bolero is a very light and active dance, much practised by the Spaniards, in which castanets are always used. *Mozo* and *muchacha* are equivalent to our phrase of lad and lass.

NOTE 115, p. 301

The heralds, at the coronation of a Spanish monarch, proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word *Castilla, Castilla, Castilla ;* which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Bonaparte.

NOTE 116, p. 303

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders, — those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted

warfare in the Peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroical Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months. While these gentlemen plead for deference to Bonaparte, and crave

> Respect for his great place — and bid the devil
> Be duly honoured for his burning throne,

it may not be altogether unreasonable to claim some modification of censure upon those who have been long and to a great extent successfully resisting this great enemy of mankind. That the energy of Spain has not uniformly been directed by conduct equal to its vigour, has been too obvious; that her armies, under their complicated disadvantages, have shared the fate of such as were defeated after taking the field with every possible advantage of arms and discipline, is surely not to be wondered at. But that a nation, under the circumstances of repeated discomfiture, internal treason, and the mismanagement incident to a temporary and hastily adopted government, should have wasted, by its stubborn, uniform, and prolonged resistance, myriads after myriads of those soldiers who had overrun the world — that some of its provinces should, like Galicia, after being abandoned by their allies, and overrun by their enemies, have recovered their freedom by their own unassisted exertions; that others, like Catalonia, undismayed by the treason which betrayed some fortresses, and the force which subdued others, should not only have continued their resistance, but have attained over their victorious enemy a superiority, which is even now enabling them to besiege and retake the places of strength which had been wrested from them, is a tale hitherto untold in the revolutionary war. To say that such a people cannot be subdued, would be presumption similar to that of those who protested that Spain could not defend herself for a year, or Portugal for a month; but that a

resistance which has been continued for so long a space, when the usurper, except during the short-lived Austrian campaign, had no other enemies on the Continent, should be now less successful, when repeated defeats have broken the reputation of the French armies, and when they are likely (it would seem almost in desperation) to seek occupation elsewhere, is a prophecy as improbable as ungracious. And while we are in the humour of severely censuring our allies, gallant and devoted as they have shown themselves in the cause of national liberty, because they may not instantly adopt those measures which we in our wisdom may deem essential to success, it might be well if we endeavoured first to resolve the previous questions, — 1st, Whether we do not at this moment know much less of the Spanish armies than those of Portugal, which were so promptly condemned as totally inadequate to assist in the preservation of their country? 2d, Whether, independently of any right we have to offer more than advice and assistance to our independent allies, we can expect that they should renounce entirely the national pride, which is inseparable from patriotism, and at once condescend not only to be saved by our assistance, but to be saved in our own way? 3d, Whether, if it be an object (as undoubtedly it is a main one) that the Spanish troops should be trained under British discipline, to the flexibility of movement, and power of rapid concert and combination, which is essential to modern war; such a consummation is likely to be produced by abusing them in newspapers and periodical publications? Lastly, Since the undoubted authority of British officers makes us now acquainted with part of the horrors that attend invasion, and which the providence of God, the valour of our navy, and perhaps the very efforts of these Spaniards, have hitherto diverted from us, it may be modestly questioned whether we ought to be too forward to estimate and condemn the feeling of temporary stupefaction which they create; lest, in so doing, we should resemble the worthy clergyman, who, while he had himself never snuffed a candle with his fingers, was disposed severely to criticise the conduct of a martyr, who winced a little among his flames.

Note 117, p. 305

The interesting account of Mr. Vaughan has made most readers acquainted with the first siege of Zaragoza. The last and fatal siege of that gallant and devoted city is detailed with great eloquence and precision in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1809, — a work in which the affairs of Spain have been treated of with attention corresponding to their deep interest, and to the peculiar sources of information open to the historian. The following are a few brief extracts from this splendid historical narrative: —

'A breach was soon made in the mud walls, and then, as in the former siege, the war was carried on in the streets and houses; but the French had been taught by experience, that in this species of warfare the Zaragozans derived a superiority from the feeling and principle which inspired them, and the cause for which they fought. The only means of conquering Zaragoza was to destroy it house by house, and street by street; and upon this system of destruction they proceeded. Three companies of miners, and eight companies of sappers, carried on this subterraneous war; the Spaniards, it is said, attempted to oppose them by countermines; these were operations to which they were wholly unused, and, according to the French statement, their miners were every day discovered and suffocated. Meantime, the bombardment was incessantly kept up. "Within the last 48 hours," said Palafox, in a letter to his friend General Doyle, "6000 shells have been thrown in. Two-thirds of the town are in ruins, but we shall perish under the ruins of the remaining third, rather than surrender." In the course of the siege, above 17,000 bombs were thrown at the town; the stock of powder with which Zaragoza had been stored was exhausted; they had none at last but what they manufactured day by day; and no other cannon-balls than those which were shot into the town, and which they collected and fired back upon the enemy.'

In the midst of these horrors and privations, the pestilence broke out in Zaragoza. To various causes, enumerated by the

annalist, he adds, 'scantiness of food, crowded quarters, unusual exertion of body, anxiety of mind, and the impossibility of recruiting their exhausted strength by needful rest, in a city which was almost incessantly bombarded, and where every hour their sleep was broken by the tremendous explosion of mines. There was now no respite, either by day or night, for this devoted city; even the natural order of light and darkness was destroyed in Zaragoza; by day it was involved in a red sulphureous atmosphere of smoke, which hid the face of heaven; by night, the fire of cannons and mortars, and the flames of burning houses, kept it in a state of terrific illumination.

'When once the pestilence had begun, it was impossible to check its progress, or confine it to one quarter of the city. Hospitals were immediately established, — there were above thirty of them; as soon as one was destroyed by the bombardment, the patients were removed to another, and thus the infection was carried to every part of Zaragoza. Famine aggravated the evil; the city had probably not been sufficiently provided at the commencement of the siege, and of the provisions which it contained, much was destroyed in the daily ruin which the mines and bombs effected. Had the Zaragozans and their garrison proceeded according to military rules, they would have surrendered before the end of January; their batteries had then been demolished, there were open breaches in many parts of their weak walls, and the enemy were already within the city. On the 30th, above sixty houses were blown up, and the French obtained possession of the monasteries of the Augustines and Las Monicas, which adjoined each other, two of the last defensible places left. The enemy forced their way into the church; every column, every chapel, every altar, became a point of defence, which was repeatedly attacked, taken, and retaken; the pavement was covered with blood, the aisles and body of the church strewed with the dead, who were trampled under foot by the combatants. In the midst of this conflict, the roof, shattered by repeated bombs, fell in; the few who were not crushed, after a short pause, which this tremendous shock, and their own unex-

pected escape, occasioned, renewed the fight with rekindling fury: fresh parties of the enemy poured in; monks, and citizens, and soldiers came to the defence, and the contest was continued upon the ruins, and the bodies of the dead and the dying.'

Yet, seventeen days after sustaining these extremities, did the heroic inhabitants of Zaragoza continue their defence; nor did they then surrender until their despair had extracted from the French generals a capitulation, more honourable than has been granted to fortresses of the first order.

Who shall venture to refuse the Zaragozans the eulogium conferred upon them by the eloquence of Wordsworth! — 'Most gloriously have the citizens of Zaragoza proved that the true army of Spain, in a contest of this nature, is the whole people. The same city has also exemplified a melancholy, yea, a dismal truth, — yet consolatory and full of joy, — that when a people are called suddenly to fight for their liberty, and are sorely pressed upon, their best field of battle is the floors upon which their children have played; the chambers where the family of each man has slept (his own or his neighbours'); upon or under the roofs by which they have been sheltered; in the gardens of their recreation; in the street, or in the market-place; before the altars of their temples, and among their congregated dwellings, blazing or uprooted.

'The government of Spain must never forget Zaragoza for a moment. Nothing is wanting to produce the same effects everywhere, but a leading mind, such as that city was blessed with. In the latter contest this has been proved; for Zaragoza contained, at that time, bodies of men from almost all parts of Spain. The narrative of those two sieges should be the manual of every Spaniard. He may add to it the ancient stories of Numantia and Saguntum; let him sleep upon the book as a pillow, and, if he be a devout adherent to the religion of his country, let him wear it in his bosom for his crucifix to rest upon.' (Wordsworth, *On the Convention of Cintra.*)

Note 118, p. 310

Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed, that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled *La Virgen del Sagrario*. The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Recisundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man, and defies the King to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The King accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the Genie to inform Recisundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the Christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Recisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play, we are informed that Don Roderick had removed the barrier, and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprised by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

Note 119, p. 311

I have ventured to apply to the movements of the French army that sublime passage in the prophecies of Joel, which seems applicable to them in more respects than that I have adopted in the text. One would think their ravages, their military appointments, the terror which they spread among invaded nations, their military discipline, their arts of political intrigue and deceit, were distinctly pointed out in the following verses of Scripture: —

'2. A day of darknesse and gloominesse, a day of clouds and of thick darknesse, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the yeares of many

generations. 3. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behinde them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them. 4. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses and as horsemen, so shall they runne. 5. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains, shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battel array. 6. Before their face shall the people be much pained; all faces shall gather blacknesse. 7. They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of warre, and they shall march every one in his wayes, and they shall not break their ranks. 8. Neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. 9. They shall run to and fro in the citie; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climbe up upon the houses: they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. 10. The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sunne and the moon shall be dark, and the starres shall withdraw their shining.'

In verse 20th also, which announces the retreat of the northern army, described in such dreadful colours, into a 'land barren and desolate,' and the dishonour with which God afflicted them for having 'magnified themselves to do great things,' there are particulars not inapplicable to the retreat of Massena; Divine Providence having, in all ages, attached disgrace as the natural punishment of cruelty and presumption.

Note 120, p. 313

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810–11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by

subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, etc., of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery: rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Massena, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity, and in many instances, when reduced themselves to short allowance, from having outmarched their supplies, they shared their pittance with the starving inhabitants, who had ventured back to view the ruins of their habitations, burnt by the retreating enemy, and to bury the bodies of their relations whom they had butchered. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence that those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it? — It is not the least of Lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

NOTE 121, p. 314

The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfarronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps on themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March, 1811, their rear-guard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry (who were indeed many miles in the rear) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed 'God save the King.' Their minstrelsy was, however, deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was

sudden, and the rout complete; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

Note 122, p. 315

In the severe action of Fuentes d'Honoro, upon 5th May, 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in nowise checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsay (let me be permitted to name a gallant countryman), who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and, putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, sabre-in-hand. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into dragoons, contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy, already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons; and the appearance of some small reinforcements, notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout. A colonel or major of their cavalry, and many prisoners (almost all intoxicated), remained in our possession. Those who consider for a moment the difference of the services, and how much an artilleryman is necessarily and naturally led to identify his own safety and utility with abiding by the tremendous implement of war, to the exercise of which he is chiefly, if not exclusively, trained, will know how to estimate the presence of mind which commanded so bold a manœuvre, and the steadiness and confidence with which it was executed.

Note 123, p. 315

The gallant Colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d'Honoro. He fell at the head of his native Highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged, with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at Colonel Cameron, was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious Highlanders, who, under the command of Colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet. Massena pays my countrymen a singular compliment in his account of the attack and defence of this village, in which he says, the British lost many officers, *and Scotch.*

Note 124, p. 316

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems, to a distinct observer, more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of Field-Marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline. In exposing his military reputation to the censure of imprudence from the most moderate, and all manner of unutterable calumnies from the ignorant and malignant, he placed at stake the dearest pledge which a military man had to offer, and nothing but the deepest conviction of the high and essential importance attached to success can be supposed an adequate motive. How great the chance of miscarriage was supposed, may be estimated from the general opinion of officers of unquestioned talents and experience, possessed of every opportunity of information; how completely the experiment has succeeded, and how much the spirit

and patriotism of our ancient allies had been underrated, is evident, not only from those victories in which they have borne a distinguished share, but from the liberal and highly honourable manner in which these opinions have been retracted. The success of this plan, with all its important consequences, we owe to the indefatigable exertions of Field-Marshal Beresford.

Note 125, p. 318

This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Græme, or Grahame. They are said, by tradition, to have descended from the Scottish chief, under whose command his countrymen stormed the wall built by the Emperor Severus between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, the fragments of which are still popularly called Græme's Dyke. Sir John the Græme, 'the hardy, wight, and wise,' is well known as the friend of Sir William Wallace. Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibbermuir were scenes of the victories of the heroic Marquis of Montrose. The pass of Killycrankie is famous for the action between King William's forces and the Highlanders in 1689—

> Where glad Dundee in faint huzzas expired.

It is seldom that one line can number so many heroes, and yet more rare when it can appeal to the glory of a living descendant in support of its ancient renown.

The allusions to the private history and character of General Grahame may be illustrated by referring to the eloquent and affecting speech of Mr. Sheridan, upon the vote of thanks to the Victor of Barosa.

GLOSSARY

abbaye, an abbey.
aboon, above.
acton, a buckram vest worn under armour.
ain, own.
air, a sand-bank.
airn, iron.
almagest, an astronomical or astrological treatise.
Almayn, German.
amice, an ecclesiastical vestment.
amrie, ambry, a cupboard, a locker.
an, if.
ance, once.
ane, one.
anerly, alone.
aneugh, enough.
angel, an old English gold coin.
arquebus, a hagbut, or heavy musket.
assagay, a slender spear or lance.
atabal, a kind of kettle-drum.
auld, old; **auld Reekie,** Edinburgh.
aventayle, the movable front of a helmet.
avoid thee, begone.

bairn, a child.
baith, both.
baldric, a belt.
bale, a beacon-fire.
ballium, a fortified court.
bandelier, a belt for carrying ammunition.
ban-dog, a watch-dog.
bandrol, a kind of banner or ensign.
banes, bones.
bang, strike violently, beat, surpass.
barbican, the fortification at a castle-gate.
barded, armoured (said of horses).
barding, horse-armour.
barret-cap, a cloth cap.
bartizan, a small overhanging turret.
basnet, a light helmet.
bassened, having a white stripe down the face.
battalia, a battalion, an army (*not* a plural).
battle, an army.
beadsman, one hired to offer prayers for another.
beamed, having a horn of the fourth year.
beaver, the movable front of a helmet.
Beltane, the first of May (a Celtic festival).
bend, bind.
bend (noun), a heraldic term.
bent, a slope; also, aimed.
beshrew, may evil befall, confound.
bicker, a cup, a wooden vessel.
bill, a kind of battle-axe or halberd.
billmen, troops armed with the bill.
black-jack, a leather jug or pitcher.
blaze, blazon, proclaim.
blink, a glimpse.
bluidy, bloody.
bonail, i. e., **bonallez,** a god-speed, parting with a friend.
bonnet-pieces, gold coins with the king's cap (bonnet) on them.
boot and bale, help and hurt.
boune, bowne, prepare, make ready.
boune, ready, prepared.
bountith, a gratuity.
bourd, a jest.
bow o' kye, a herd of cattle.
bower, a chamber, a lodging-place, a lady's apartments.
bra', braw, brave.
brach, a bitch-hound.
bracken, fern.
brae, a hillside.
braid, broad.
branking, prancing.
brast, burst.
bratchet, a slowhound.

brigantine, a kind of body armour.
brigg, a bridge.
brock, a badger.
broke, quartered (the cutting up of a deer).
brose, broth.
brotikins, buskins.
buff, a thick cloth.
burn, a brook.
busk, dress, prepare.
buxom, lively.
by times, betimes, early.

caird, a tinker.
cairn, a heap of stones, a rocky point.
canna, cotton-grass.
cantle, the crown.
canty, cheerful, lively.
cap of maintenance, a cap worn by the king-at-arms or chief herald.
carle, a fellow.
carline, a woman, a witch.
carp, talk.
cast, a pair (of hawks).
causey, a causeway.
chanters, the pipes of the bagpipe.
check at, meditate attack (in falconry).
cheer, face, countenance.
claymore, a large sword.
clerk, a scholar.
clip, clasp, embrace.
clout, mend.
cogie, a small wooden bowl.
combust, an astrological term.
corbel, a bracket.
coronach, a dirge.
correi, a hollow in a hillside, a resort of game.
crabs, crab-apples.
craig, the head.
crenell, an aperture for shooting arrows through.
cresset, a hanging lamp or chandelier.
crouse, bold.
culver, a small cannon.
cumber, trouble.
cummer, a gossip, an intimate friend.
curch, a matron's coif, or head-dress.
cushat-dove, a wood-pigeon.
cutty, short.

daggled, bespattered.
darkling, in the dark.
daunder, saunter, wander.
daunton, subdue, tame.
deas, a dais, a platform.
deft, skilful.
demi-volt, a movement in horsemanship.
dern, hid.
dight, decked, dressed, prepared.
dingle, a closely wooded hollow.
dinna, do not.
dinnle, tinkle, thrill.
dint, strike, knock.
dirdum, an uproar.
donjon, the main tower or keep of a castle.
doom, judgment, arbitration.
double tressure, a kind of border in heraldry.
dought, was able, could.
down, a hill.
downa, do not.
dramock, meal and water.
drie, suffer, endure.
drouth, thirst.
duddies, rags, tatters.
dwam, a swoon, a fainting fit.

earn, erne, an eagle.
eburnine, made of ivory.
een, eyes.
embossed, exhausted by running, foaming at the mouth (hunter's term).
emprise, enterprise.
ensenzie, an ensign, a war-cry.
even, spotless, pure.

failzie, failure.
falcon, a kind of small cannon.
fand, found.
fang, to catch.
far yaud, the signal made by a shepherd to his dog, when he is to drive away some sheep at a distance.
Fastern's night, Shrove Tuesday.
fauld, a sheep-fold.

fay, faith.
ferlie, a marvel.
fieldfare, a species of thrush.
fleech, flatter, cajole.
flemens-firth, an asylum for outlaws.
foray, a predatory inroad.
force, a waterfall.
fosse, a ditch, a moat.
fou, full, tipsy.
frae, from.
fretted, adorned with raised work.
fro, from.
frounced, flounced, plaited.

gae, go; **gaed,** went.
gaitling, a young child.
galliard, a lively dance.
gallowglasses, heavy-armed soldiers (Celtic).
gane, gone.
gang, go.
gar, make.
gazehound, a hound that pursues by sight rather than scent.
gear, goods, possessions.
gent, high-born, valiant and courteous.
gest, a deed, an exploit.
ghast, ghastly.
gie, give.
gin, if.
gipon, a doublet or jacket worn under armour.
glaive, a broadsword.
glamour, a magical illusion.
glee-maiden, a dancing-girl.
gleg, quick, sharp, lively.
glidders, slippery stones.
glozing, flattering.
gonfalone, a banner or ensign.
gorged, having the throat cut.
gorget, armour for the throat.
graith, armour.
gramarye, magic.
gramercy, great thanks (French, *grand merci*).
gree, prize.
greet and grane, weep and groan.
gripple, grasping, miserly.
grisly, horrible, grim.
guarded, edged, trimmed.
gude, good.
gules, red (heraldic).
gylte, a young sow.

hackbuteer, a soldier armed with hackbut or hagbut, a musketeer.
hae't, haet, an atom.
haffets, cheeks.
hag, broken ground in a bog.
hagbut (hackbut, haquebut, arquebus, harquebuss, etc.), a heavy musket.
halberd, halbert, a combined spear and battle-axe.
hale, haul, drag.
hame, home.
handsel, a gift, earnest money.
hanger, a short broadsword.
harried, plundered, sacked.
haud, hold.
hearse, a canopy over a tomb, or the tomb itself.
heeze, heise, hoist, raise.
hent, seize.
heriot, tribute due to a lord from a vassal.
heron-shew, a young heron.
hight, called, named, promised.
holt, wood, woodland.
hosen, hose (old plural).
howf, howff, a haunt, a resort.

idlesse, idleness.
ilka, each, every.
imp, a child.
inch, an island.

jack, a leather jacket, a kind of armour for the body.
jennet, a small Spanish horse.
jerkin, a kind of short coat.
jerrid, a wooden javelin about five feet long.
jowing, ringing or tolling.

kale, broth.
kebbuck, cheese.
keek, peep.
ken, know.
kern, a light-armed soldier (Celtic).

kill, a cell.
kipper, salmon or sea trout.
kirk, a church.
kirn, the Scottish harvest-home.
kirtle, a skirt, a gown.
kist, a chest.
kittle, ticklish, delicate.
knosp, a knob (architectural).
knowe, a knoll, a hillock.
kye, cows.

lair, learning.
lair, to stick in the mud.
largesse, largess, liberality, gift.
lauds, psalms.
launcegay, a kind of spear.
laverock, a lark.
leading-staff, a staff carried by a commanding officer.
leaguer, a camp.
leal-fast, loyal, faithful.
leash, a thong for leading a greyhound; also the hounds so led.
leister, to spear.
leven, a lawn, an open space between or among woods.
leveret, a young hare.
levin, lightning, thunderbolt.
libbard, a leopard.
Lincoln green, a cloth worn by huntsmen.
linn, a waterfall, a pool below a fall, a precipice.
linstock, lintstock, a handle for the lint or match used in firing cannon.
lists, the enclosure for a tournament.
litherlie, mischievous, vicious.
loon, a rogue, a strumpet.
loot, let.
lorn, lost.
loup, leap.
lourd, rather.
lout, bend, stoop.
lurch, rob.
lurcher, a dog that **lurches** (lurks), or lies in wait for game.
lurdane, a blockhead.
lyke-wake, the watching of a corpse before burial.
lyme-dog, a bloodhound.

mair, more.
make, do.
malison, a malediction, a curse.
Malvoisie, Malmsey wine.
march, a border, a frontier.
march-treason, offences committed on the Border.
massy, massive.
maukin, a hare.
maun, must.
mavis, the thrush.
meikle, much, great.
melle, mell, meddle.
merk, a Scottish coin worth about $13\frac{1}{3}d.$
merle, the blackbird.
merlin, a species of falcon.
mewed, shut up, confined.
mickle, much, great.
minion, favourite.
miniver, a kind of fur.
mirk, dark.
mony, many.
moonlight, smuggled spirits.
morion, a steel cap, a helmet.
morrice-pike, a long heavy spear.
morris, a kind of dance.
morsing-horns, powder-flasks.
moss, a morass, a bog.
mot, mote, must, might.
muckle, much, large.
muir, a moor, a heath.
mullet, a figure of a star, usually with five straight points.

nae, no.
need-fire, a beacon-fire.
neist, next.
nese, a nose.

oe, an island.
O hone, alas!
Omrahs, nobles (Turkish).
or, gold (heraldic).
orra, odd, occasional.
owches, jewels.
ower, over, too.

pall, fine or rich cloth.
pallioun, a pavilion.

palmer, a pilgrim to the Holy Land.
pardoner, a seller of priestly indulgences.
partisan, a halberd, a combination of spear and battle-axe.
peel, a Border tower.
pensils, small pennons or streamers.
pentacle, a magic diagram.
pibroch, a Highland air on the bagpipe.
pied, variegated.
pike, pick.
pinnet, a pinnacle.
pirn, a spool, a reel.
placket, a stomacher, a petticoat, a slit in a petticoat, etc.
plate-jack, coat-armour.
plump, a body of cavalry, a group, a company.
poke, a sack, a pocket.
port, a lively tune, a catch.
post and pair, an old game at cards.
pow, a head.
pranked, dressed up, adorned.
presence, the royal presence-chamber.
pricked, spurred.
pricker, a horseman, a mounted soldier.
propine, a present.
prore, the prow.
pryse, the note blown at the death of the game.
puir, poor.
pursuivant, an attendant on a herald.

quaigh, a wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.
quarry, game (hunter's term).
quatre-feuille, quatrefoil (Gothic ornament).
quit, requite.

rack, a floating cloud.
racking, flying, like a breaking cloud.
rade, rode.
rais, the master of a vessel.
reads, counsels.
reave, tear away.
rebeck, an ancient musical instrument, an early form of the fiddle.
rede, a story, counsel, advice.
reiver, a plunderer, a robber.
reliquaire, a repository for relics.
retrograde, an astrological term.
rie, a prince or chief; **O hone a rie,** alas for the chief!
rin, run.
risp, creak.
rive, tear.
rochet, a bishop's short surplice.
rokelay, a short cloak.
rood, a cross (as in **Holy-Rood**).
room, a piece of land.
rowan, the mountain-ash.
runnel, a small stream of water.
ruth, pity, compassion.

sack, Sherry or Canary wine.
sackless, innocent.
sae, so.
saga, a Scandinavian epic.
sained, blessed.
sair, sore, very.
sall, shall.
saltier, in heraldry an ordinary in the form of a St. Andrew's cross.
salvo-shot, a salute of artillery.
sark, a shirt.
saye, say, assertion.
scalds, Scandinavian minstrels.
scallop, a pilgrim's cockle-shell worn as an emblem.
scapular, an ecclesiastical scarf or short cloak.
scathe, harm, injury.
scaur, a cliff, a precipitous bank of earth.
scaur'd, scared.
scrae, a bank of loose stones.
scrogg, a stunted tree, underwood.
sea-dog, a seal.
seguidille, a Spanish dance.
selcouth, strange, uncouth.
selle, a saddle.
seneschal, the steward of a castle.
sewer, an officer who serves up a feast.
shalm, a shawm, a musical instrument.
sheeling, a shepherd's hut.
sheen, bright, shining.

shent, shamed.
shirra, a sheriff.
shrieve, shrive, absolve.
shroud, a garment, a plaid.
sic, such.
siller, silver.
skirl, scream, sound shrilly.
sleights, tricks, stratagems.
slogan, the war-cry or gathering word of a Border clan.
snood, a maiden's hair-band or fillet.
soland, solan-goose, gannet.
sooth, true, truth.
sped, despatched, 'done for.'
speer, speir, ask.
speerings, tidings.
spell, make out, study out.
sperthe, a battle-axe.
splent, a splinter.
springlet, a small spring.
spule, a shoulder.
spurn, kick.
stag of ten, one having ten branches on his antlers.
stamock, the stomach.
stance, a station.
stane, stone.
stark, stout, stalwart.
stern, a star.
sterte, started.
stirrup-cup, a parting cup.
stole, an ecclesiastical scarf (sometimes a robe).
stoled, wearing the **stole.**
store, stored up.
stoun, stown, stolen.
stour, severe.
stowre, battle, tumult.
strain, stock, race.
strath, a broad river-valley.
strathspey, a Highland dance.
streight, strait.
strook, struck, stricken.
stumah, faithful.
swith, haste, quickly.
syde, long.
syne, since; **lang syne,** long ago.

tabard, a herald's coat.
tait, a tuft.
targe, a shield.
tarn, a mountain lake.
tartan, the full Highland dress, made of the chequered stuff so termed.
tett, a plait or plaited knot.
throstle, a thrush.
tide, time.
tine, lose; **tint,** lost.
tire, a head-dress.
toom, empty.
tottered, tattered, ragged.
toun, a town.
train, allure, entice.
tressure, a border (heraldic).
trews, Highland trousers.
trine, threefold, an astrological term.
trow, believe, trust.
trowls, passes round.
truncheon, a staff, the shaft of a spear.
twa, two.
tyke, a dog.
tyne, lose.

uncouth, strange, unknown.
uneath, not easily, with difficulty.
unsparred, unbarred.
upsees, a Bacchanalian cry or interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.
urchin, an elf.

vail, avail.
vail, lower, let fall.
vair, a kind of fur, probably of the squirrel.
vantage-coign, an advantageous position.
vaunt-brace, or **warn-brace,** armour for the forearm.
vaward, van, front.
vilde, vile.

wad, would.
wan, won.
Warden-raid, a raid commanded by a Border Warden in person.
ware, beware of.
warlock, a wizard.
warped, frozen.
warre, worse.

warrison, a note of assault.
warstle, wrestle.
wassail, spiced ale, a drinking-bout.
wauk, wake.
waur, worse.
weapon-schaw, a military array of a county, a muster.
weed, a garment.
weird, fate, doom.
whenas, when.
whilere, while-ere, erewhile, a while ago.
whiles, sometimes.
whilom, whilome, formerly.
whin, gorse, furze.
whingers, knives, poniards.
whinyard, a hunter's knife.
wight, active, gallant, war-like.
wildering, bewildering.
wimple, a veil.
woe-worth, woe be to.
woned, dwelt.
wraith, an apparition, a spectre.
wreak, avenge.
wud, would.
wuddie, the gallows.

yare, ready.
yate, a gate.
yaud, see **far yaud.**
yerk, jerk.
yode, went.

END OF VOLUME II

POEMS

III

POEMS

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THE LADY OF THE LAKE

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

TO

THE MOST NOBLE

JOHN JAMES

MARQUIS OF ABERCORN,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

AFTER the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odyssey:* —

> Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται·
> Νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον.
>
> *Odys.* xxii. 5.

> One venturous game my hand has won to-day —
> Another, gallants, yet remains to play.

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honourable foe. The Poems of Ossian had by their popularity sufficiently shown that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more, of that romantic country where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labour of love, and it was no less so to recall the

manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV, and particularly of James V, to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady, to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. 'Do not be so rash,' she said, 'my dearest cousin. You are already popular, — more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high, — do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity.' I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose, —

> He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch
> To gain or lose it all.

'If I fail,' I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, 'it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life: you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed, —

> Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
> The dirk, and the feather, and a'!'

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, although I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname,

I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiassed friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retractation of the unfavourable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In such cases affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favourable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to 'heeze up my hope,' like the 'sportsman with his cutty gun,' in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashestiel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*, in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favourable a representative of readers at large. It is of course to be supposed that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention, through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of revery which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. Another of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the king with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds

his bugle to summon his attendants. He was probably thinking of the lively, but somewhat licentious, old ballad, in which the *dénouement* of a royal intrigue takes place as follows: —

He took a bugle frae his side,
He blew both loud and shrill,
And four and twenty belted knights
Came skipping ower the hill;
Then he took out a little knife,
Let a' his duddies fa',
And he was the brawest gentleman
That was amang them a'.
And we 'll go no more a roving, etc.

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect, with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a 'trot for the avenue.'

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June, 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favours for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been

at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful or so superabundantly candid as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me, which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavoured to deserve the partiality by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labour that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection that, if posterity should think me undeserving of the favour with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, 'they could not but say I *had* the crown,' and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice rather than the judgment of the public had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Rokeby*, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say that, during my short preëminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is as sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as schoolboys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering that they are in such cases apt to explode in the handling. Let me add that my reign (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power; and I had the advantage — rather an uncommon one with our irritable race — to enjoy general favour without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

ARGUMENT

THE scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

CANTO FIRST

THE CHASE

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
  On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
  Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string, —
  O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
  Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
  Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
  Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.

At each according pause was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed;
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

O, wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O, wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,

And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
'To arms! the foemen storm the wall,'
The antlered monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.[1]

III

Yelled on the view the opening pack;
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awakened mountain gave response.

[1] See Note 1.

A hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
A hundred voices joined the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern where, 't is told,
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,

And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly on the mountain-side
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V

The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wandered o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And pondered refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copsewood grey
That waved and wept on Loch Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
Fresh vigour with the hope returned,
With flying foot the heath he spurned,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI

'T were long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;

What reins were tightened in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith, —
For twice that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reached the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,[1]
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the bloodhounds staunch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.

1 See Note 2.

Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII

The Hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound and death-halloo
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew:[1]—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couched the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

[1] See Note 3.

IX

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
'I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!'

X

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat

Prolonged the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast;
And on the Hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day,
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

XI

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.[1]
The rocky summits, split and rent,

[1] The Tower of Babel (Gen. xi, 1–9).

Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale and violet flower
Found in each clift a narrow bower;
Foxglove and nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;

Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the Hunter strayed,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,

Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV

And now, to issue from the glen,[1]
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb with footing nice
A far-projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains that like giants stand
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,

[1] See Note 4.

The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed;
And, 'What a scene were here,' he cried,
'For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow far away,
The turrets of a cloister grey;
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide on the lake the lingering morn!
How sweet at eve the lover's lute
Chime when the groves were still and mute!
And when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matins' distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell!

And bugle, lute, and bell, and all
Should each bewildered stranger call
To friendly feast and lighted hall.

XVI

'Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now — beshrew yon nimble deer —
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that; the war and chase
Give little choice of resting-place; —
A summer night in greenwood spent
Were but to-morrow's merriment:
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found;
To meet with Highland plunderers here[1]
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.
I am alone; — my bugle-strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried.'

XVII

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,

[1] See Note 5.

From underneath an aged oak
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow twig to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touched this silver strand
Just as the Hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head upraised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form or lovelier face!

What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown, —
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace, —
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue, —
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear!

XIX

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair
Mantled a plaid with modest care,

And never brooch the folds combined,
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine in her mirror blue
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unrevealed
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame; —
O, need I tell that passion's name?

XX

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne: —
'Father!' she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
Awhile she paused, no answer came; —
'Malcolm, was thine the blast?' the name
Less resolutely uttered fell,

The echoes could not catch the swell.
'A stranger I,' the Huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar
Pushed her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen; —
So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould
For hardy sports or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless except his blade,

His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trode the shore.
Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy,
Yet seemed that tone and gesture bland
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII

Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That Highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill.
'Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer.'
'Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has erred,' he said;
'No right have I to claim, misplaced,

The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand
I found a fay in fairy land!'

XXIII

'I well believe,' the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the side, —
'I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight, —
A grey-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent.[1]
He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting-suit of Lincoln green,
That tasselled horn so gaily gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be

[1] See Note 6.

To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne.'

XXIV

The stranger smiled: — 'Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doomed, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprise
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me first the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide.'
The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew;
With heads erect and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV

The stranger viewed the shore around;
'T was all so close with copsewood bound,
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain maiden showed
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And opened on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.[1]

XXVI

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.

[1] See Note 7.

The lighter pine-trees overhead
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And withered heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favoured flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she stayed,
And gaily to the stranger said:
'On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!'

XXVII

'My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee!' —
He crossed the threshold, — and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed,

Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
That blackening streaks of blood retained,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised: —
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
'I never knew but one,' he said,

'Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle-field.'
She sighed, then smiled and took the word:
'You see the guardian champion's sword;
As light it trembles in his hand
As in my grasp a hazel wand:
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart,[1]
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old.'

XXIX

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame,
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unasked his birth and name.[2]
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestioned turn, the banquet o'er.

[1] See Note 8. [2] See Note 9.

At length his rank the stranger names,
'The Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripped his comrades, missed the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wandered here.'

XXX

Fain would the Knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire.
Well showed the elder lady's mien
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks displayed
The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Showed she was come of gentle race.
'T were strange in ruder rank to find
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,

Turned all inquiry light away: —
'Weird women we! by dale and down
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'T is thus our charmèd rhymes we sing.'
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Filled up the symphony between.[1]

XXXI

SONG

'Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

'No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang of war-steed champing,

[1] See Note 10.

Trump nor pibroch summon here
  Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
  At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
  Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sound shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.'

XXXII

She paused, — then, blushing, led the lay,
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG CONTINUED

'Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
  While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
  Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying:

Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé.'

XXXIII

The hall was cleared, — the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then, — from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night! —
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident, undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged

With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view, —
O were his senses false or true?
Dreamed he of death or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk and speak of love;
She listened with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore. —
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,

Half showing, half concealing, all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm;
The aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse, —
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast: —
'Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fevered dream,

But still the Douglas is the theme?
I'll dream no more, — by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more.'
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose,
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

THE ISLAND

I

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'T is morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,[1]
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan-bane!

II

SONG

'Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;

[1] See Note 11.

Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

'High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battled line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport!
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honoured meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle!

III

SONG CONTINUED

'But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap erewhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

'Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;

If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
  Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.'

IV

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reached the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The Harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seemed watching the awakening fire;
So still he sat as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;

So still, as life itself were fled
In the last sound his harp had sped.

V

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sat and smiled.
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vexed spaniel from the beach
Bayed at the prize beyond his reach?
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepened on her cheek the rose?
Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy
And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI

While yet he loitered on the spot,
It seemed as Ellen marked him not;
But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made;

And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts, — the maid, unconscious still,
Watched him wind slowly round the hill;
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid, —
'Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!'
'T was thus upbraiding conscience said, —
'Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of Southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strained his eye
Another step than thine to spy.'
'Wake, Allan-bane,' aloud she cried
To the old minstrel by her side, —
'Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme!' [1]
Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,
When deep the conscious maiden blushed;

[1] See Note 12.

For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII

The minstrel waked his harp, — three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
'Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,'
Clasping his withered hands, he said,
'Vainly thou bidst me wake the strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe;
And the proud march which victors tread
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O, well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,[1]
Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

[1] See Note 13.

VIII

'But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed,
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's bannered hall,
Ere Douglases, to ruin driven,[1]
Were exiled from their native heaven.
O! if yet worse mishap and woe
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow,
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die!'

IX

Soothing she answered him: 'Assuage,
Mine honoured friend, the fears of age;

[1] See Note 14.

All melodies to thee are known
That harp has rung or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey — what marvel, then,
At times unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resigned
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me' — she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue harebell from the ground, —
'For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower that loves the lea
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the King's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair.'

Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

X

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old Harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw,
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
'Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours, thou hast lost!
O, might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birthright place,
To see my favourite's step advance
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!' [1]

XI

'Fair dreams are these,' the maiden cried, —
Light was her accent, yet she sighed, —
'Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy;

[1] The well-known cognizance of the Douglas family.

Nor would my footstep spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye, —
Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch Lomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
A Lennox foray — for a day.'

XII

The ancient bard her glee repressed:
'Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
For who, through all this western wild,
Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled?
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew; [1]
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers give place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide;
And since, though outlawed, hath his hand
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dared give — ah! woe the day,
That I such hated truth should say! —

1 See Note 15.

The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer,[1]
Even the rude refuge we have here?
Alas, this wild marauding Chief
Alone might hazard our relief,
And now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear;
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear
That thou mightst guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
Thy hand is on a lion's mane.'

XIII

'Minstrel,' the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
'My debts to Roderick's house I know:
All that a mother could bestow
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child;

1 See Note 16.

To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life, — but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell; [1]
Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV

'Thou shak'st, good friend, thy tresses grey, —
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own? — I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave: [2]
And generous, — save vindictive mood
Or jealous transport chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:

[1] See Note 17. [2] See Note 18.

I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red
From peasants slaughtered in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child, — and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe, —
I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air:
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best, —
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?'

XV

'What think I of him? — woe the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!
Thy father's battle-brand, of yore,
For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,[1]
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow [2]
The footstep of a secret foe.
If courtly spy hath harboured here,
What may we for the Douglas fear?
What for this island, deemed of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray
What yet may jealous Roderick say? —
Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!
Bethink thee of the discord dread
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme;
Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud:
Beware! — But hark! what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch nor aspens wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake;

[1] See Note 19. [2] See Note 20.

Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard —
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar.'

XVI

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steered full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they passed,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow

From their loud chanters down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sounds, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away,
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear,
Those thrilling sounds that call the might [1]
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarred;

[1] See Note 21.

And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain:
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest — all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain, but slow
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII

The war-pipes ceased, but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
'Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!'
And near, and nearer as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX

BOAT SONG

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green Pine!
Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon and broadly to grow,
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back again,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!' [1]

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise again,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

[1] See Note 22.

XX

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
Glen-Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.[1]
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine!
O that the rosebud that graces yon islands
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

XXI

With all her joyful female band
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,

[1] See Note 23.

And high their snowy arms they threw,
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
'Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?'
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed,
And when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung: —
'List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours,' she cried, 'the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain-side.'
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII

Some feelings are to mortals given
With less of earth in them than heaven;

And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'T is that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely pressed,
Such holy drops her tresses steeped,
Though 't was an hero's eye that weeped.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Marked she that fear — affection's proof —
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII

Allan, with wistful look the while,
Marked Roderick landing on the isle;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
Then dashed with hasty hand away
From his dimmed eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said:
'Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy

In my poor follower's glistening eye?
I'll tell thee: — he recalls the day
When in my praise he led the lay
O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud,
While many a minstrel answered loud,
When Percy's Norman pennon, won
In bloody field, before me shone,
And twice ten knights, the least a name
As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
Was I of all that marshalled crowd,
Though the waned crescent owned my might,
And in my train trooped lord and knight,
Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,
And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast, —
O, it out-beggars all I lost!'

XXIV

Delightful praise! — like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,

For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flash of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curled closely round his bonnet blue.
Trained to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy;

Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
Outstripped in speed the mountaineer:
Right up Ben Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast
As played the feather on his crest.
Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI

Now back they wend their watery way,
And, 'O my sire!' did Ellen say,
'Why urge thy chase so far astray?

And why so late returned? And why' –
The rest was in her speaking eye.
'My child, the chase I follow far,
'T is mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade;
Nor strayed I safe, for all around
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risked life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me again.'

XXVII

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light

Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made
Ere he assembled round the flame
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he played,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said: —

XXVIII

'Short be my speech; — nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father, — if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honoured mother; — Ellen, — why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?
And Græme, in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land, —
List all! — The King's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,[1]

[1] See Note 24.

Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless and so ruthless known,
Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game.
What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
By fate of Border chivalry.[1]
Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know:
Your counsel in the streight I show.'

XXIX

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,
Then turned their ghastly look, each one,

[1] See Note 25.

This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme,
But from his glance it well appeared
'T was but for Ellen that he feared;
While, sorrowful, but undismayed,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:
'Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er;
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For well thou know'st, at this grey head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy King's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek apart
The refuge of some forest cell;
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor
The stern pursuit be passed and o'er.'

XXX

'No, by mine honour,' Roderick said,
'So help me Heaven, and my good blade!

No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
My father's ancient crest and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
Will bind to us each Western Chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
And when I light the nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of King James! —
Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
I meant not all my heat might say. —
Small need of inroad or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite
Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foiled King from pathless glen
Shall bootless turn him home again.'

XXXI

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean tide's incessant roar,
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
Till wakened by the morning beam;
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale; —
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?
Thus Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawned around,
By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak, — but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
'Roderick, enough! enough!' he cried,
'My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be, — forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'T was I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
I love him still, despite my wrongs
By hasty wrath and slanderous tongues.
O, seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined!'

XXXIII

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darkened brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited Love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes that mocked at tears before
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherished hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its checkered shroud,
While every sob — so mute were all —
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke —
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
'Back, beardless boy!' he sternly said,
'Back, minion! holdst thou thus at nought
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delayed.'
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
'Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety save his sword!'
Thus as they strove their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been — but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength: — 'Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes my foe.[1]
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!

[1] See Note 26.

What! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil?'
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced and blade half bared.

XXXV

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
As faltered through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful word:
'Rest safe till morning; pity 't were
Such cheek should feel the midnight air![1]
Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey with his freeborn clan
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show. —
Malise, what ho!' — his henchman[2] came:
'Give our safe-conduct to the Græme.'
Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold:

[1] See Note 27. [2] See Note 28.

'Fear nothing for thy favourite hold;
The spot an angel deigned to grace
Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his back
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.
Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, — nay,
Nought here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen
So secret but we meet again, —
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour,' —
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI

Old Allan followed to the strand —
Such was the Douglas's command —
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme
From those who to the signal came;
Far up the lake 't were safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.

He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broadsword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened fold,
And stripped his limbs to such array
As best might suit the watery way, —

XXXVII

Then spoke abrupt: 'Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!'
The Minstrel's hand he kindly pressed, —
'O, could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme
Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honoured Douglas dwell
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare, —
I may not give the rest to air!
Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side.'
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,

And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye,
Far mid the lake his form to spy,
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave.
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD

THE GATHERING

I

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store
Of their strange ventures happed by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.[1]

[1] See Note 29.

II

The Summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy:
The mountain-shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water-lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain-side,
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace and rest and love.

III

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.

With sheathèd broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such Antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast; —
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV

A heap of withered boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian the Hermit by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grizzled beard and matted hair

Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,[1]
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 't was said, of heathen lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er.
The hallowed creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse.
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with care;
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase called off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.[2]
His mother watched a midnight fold,

[1] See Note 30. [2] See Note 31.

Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scattered lay the bones of men
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fettered there the hand
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The fieldfare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blindworm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mocked at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flushed and full,
For heath-bell with her purple bloom
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sat shrouded in her mantle's shade:
She said no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;[1]
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,

[1] See Note 32.

Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite,
But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfessed.

VI

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain the learning of the age
Unclasped the sable-lettered page;
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied

To curious and presumptuous pride;
Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII

The desert gave him visions wild,[1]
Such as might suit the spectre's child.
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
Till from their foam his dazzled eyes
Beheld the River Demon rise:
The mountain mist took form and limb
Of noontide hag or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swelled with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death;
Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim
Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,

[1] See Note 33.

The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;[1]
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;[2]
The thunderbolt had split the pine, —
All augured ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII

'T was all prepared; — and from the rock
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide
Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet framed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave[3]

[1] See Note 34. [2] See Note 35. [3] See Note 36.

Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross thus formed he held on high,
With wasted hand and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke: —

IX

'Woe to the clansman who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and woe.'
He paused; — the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook;
And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his mustered force,

Burst with loud roar their answer hoarse,
'Woe to the traitor, woe!'
Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar, —
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his muttered spell:
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud: —
'Woe to the wretch who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,
A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
And infamy and woe.'

Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goshawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
Of curses stammered slow;
Answering with imprecation dread,
'Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head
We doom to want and woe!'
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the grey pass where birches wave
On Beala-nam-bo.

XI

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenchèd hand,
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's head
Who, summoned to his chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed.
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quenched among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he reared,

Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
'When flits this Cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!'
He ceased; no echo gave again
The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII

Then Roderick with impatient look
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
'Speed, Malise, speed!' he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
'The muster-place be Lanrick mead —
Instant the time — speed, Malise, speed!'
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew:
High stood the henchman on the prow;
So rapidly the barge-men row,

The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide[1]
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!

[1] See Note 37.

The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed
Are in thy course — speed, Malise, speed!

XIV

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.
Nor slacked the messenger his pace;
He showed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changèd cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swath his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed,
The falconer tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray

Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blithe carol from the cloud
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

XV

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green;
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
Their lord shall speed the signal on. —
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way.
What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place! —
Within the hall, where torch's ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.

His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach[1] resound.

XVI

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
  He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
  When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
  From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
  To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
  Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
  Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
  Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
  When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
  Sage counsel in cumber,

[1] See Note 38.

Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever!

XVII

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'T is not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste or deadly fear
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast: — unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall;
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood;
'The muster-place is Lanrick mead:
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!'

XVIII

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.

In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu, —
'Alas!' she sobbed, — 'and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!'
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she marked the henchman's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
'Kinsman,' she said, 'his race is run
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen, — the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son. —
And you, in many a danger true,

At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead.'
Then weapon-clang and martial call
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatched sword and targe with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrowed force;
Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

XIX

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.[1]
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear that gathered in his eye
He left the mountain-breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,

[1] See Note 39.

But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reeled his sympathetic eye,
He dashed amid the torrent's roar;
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice, — the foam splashed high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen, — forever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife,
Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel pathway strained.

XX

A blithesome rout that morning-tide
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude but glad procession came
Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;

And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step and bashful hand
She held the kerchief's snowy band.
The gallant bridegroom by her side
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI

Who meets them at the churchyard gate?
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word:
'The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!'
And must he change so soon the hand
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?

And must the day so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom! — it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brook no delay;
Stretch to the race, — away! away!

XXII

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And lingering eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
What in the racer's bosom stirred?
The sickening pang of hope deferred,
And memory with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame;
The stormy joy of mountaineers
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,

And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve and feeling strong
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII

SONG

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if returned from conquered foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,[1]
Rushing in conflagration strong
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
Thence southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,

[1] See Note 40.

From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,
Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath but by his chieftain's hand,
No law but Roderick Dhu's command.[1]

XXV

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,

[1] See Note 41.

On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con;
All seemed at peace. — Now wot ye why
The Chieftain with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scanned with care?
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
A fair though cruel pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard in Celtic tongue
Has Coir-nan-Ursikin been sung;[1]
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin Cave.

XXVI

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had stayed full many a rock,
Hurled by primeval earthquake shock
From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,

[1] See Note 42.

They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
And formed the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch with mingled shade
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs with hideous sway
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern grey.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wild-cat leaves her young;
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Grey Superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick with a chosen few
Repassed the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin Cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo; [1]
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the Chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord; [2]
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low-levelled sunbeam's light!
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.

[1] See Note 43. [2] See Note 44.

Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII

Their Chief with step reluctant still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove, —
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark! what mingles in the strain?

It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'T is Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

Ave Maria! maiden mild!
Listen to a maiden's prayer!
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though banished, outcast, and reviled —
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!
Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled:
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX

Died on the harp the closing hymn, —
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page with humble sign
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then while his plaid he round him cast,
'It is the last time — 't is the last,'
He muttered thrice, — 'the last time e'er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!'
It was a goading thought, — his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
An instant 'cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,

Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where mustered in the vale below
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI

A various scene the clansmen made:
Some sat, some stood, some slowly strayed;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade
Or lance's point a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claimed her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

THE PROPHECY

I

'THE rose is fairest when 't is budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!'
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark! — on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
'Stand, or thou diest! — What, Malise? — soon
Art thou returned from Braes of Doune.

By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe.'
For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.
'Where sleeps the Chief?' the henchman said.
'Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I 'll be your guide.'
Then called a slumberer by his side,
And stirred him with his slackened bow,—
'Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the track
Keep eagle watch till I come back.'

III

Together up the pass they sped:
'What of the foeman?' Norman said.
'Varying reports from near and far;
This certain, — that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command to march from Doune;
King James the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide

A shelter for thy bonny bride?'
'What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?'

IV

''T is well advised, — the Chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.
But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?'
'It is because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm called; by which, afar,[1]
Our sires foresaw the events of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew.'

MALISE

'Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had

[1] See Note 45.

When swept our merrymen Gallangad,[1]
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery spark;
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kerns in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
And when we came to Dennan's Row
A child might scathless stroke his brow.'

V

NORMAN

'That bull was slain; his reeking hide
They stretched the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.[2]
Couched on a shelf beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.

[1] See Note 46. [2] See Note 47.

Nor distant rests the Chief; — but hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,[1]
His morsel claims with sullen croak?'

MALISE

'Peace! peace! to other than to me
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleaned from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see — and now
Together they descend the brow.'

VI

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word: —
'Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still

[1] See Note 48.

Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance, —
'T is hard for such to view, unfurled,
The curtain of the future world.
Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,
This for my Chieftain have I borne! —
The shapes that sought my fearful couch
A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man — save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law —
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
But borne and branded on my soul: —
WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE.'[1]

VII

'Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair.
Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood

[1] See Note 49.

But first our broadswords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offered to the auspicious blow:
A spy has sought my land this morn, —
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside,
Till in deep path or dingle brown
He light on those shall bring him down.
But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?'

VIII

'At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive,
Two Barons proud their banners wave.
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar.'
'By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.
When move they on?' 'To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune.'
'Then shall it see a meeting stern!
But, for the place, — say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened by them, we well might bide

The battle on Benledi's side.
Thou couldst not? — well! Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy glen;
Within Loch Katrine's gorge we 'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved! — But why —
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
'T is stubborn as his trusty targe.
Each to his post! — all know their charge.'
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX

Where is the Douglas? — he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the grey stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan,

While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are poured on her unheeding ear.
'He will return — dear lady, trust! —
With joy return; — he will — he must.
Well was it time to seek afar
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cowed by the approaching storm.
I saw their boats with many a light,
Floating the livelong yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I marked at morn how close they ride,
Thick moored by the lone islet's side,
Like wild ducks couching in the fen
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the mainland side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?'

X

ELLEN

'No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,

The tear that glistened in his eye
Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his; e'en as the lake,
Itself disturbed by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trowed thine omen aught?
O no! 't was apprehensive thought
For the kind youth, — for Roderick too —
Let me be just — that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!"
Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;
He goes to do — what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!'

XI

'Nay, lovely Ellen! — dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe, and for the Græme, —
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name! —
My visioned sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you.
When did my gifted dream beguile?
Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings slow
That presaged this approaching woe!
Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot!
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such a wondrous tale I know —
Dear lady, change that look of woe,
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.'

ELLEN

'Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear.'
The Minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII

BALLAD[1]

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

'O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

'O Alice, 't was all for thy locks so bright,
And 't was all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight
Thy brother bold I slew.

'Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

'And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away.'

[1] See Note 50.

'O Richard! if my brother died,
'T was but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

'If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest-green.

'And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.'

XIII

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good greenwood;
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill,[1] —
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

[1] See Note 51.

'Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?[1]
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?[2]

'Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;[3]
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

'Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.'

XIV

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,

[1] See Note 52. [2] See Note 53. [3] See Note 54.

And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
'I fear not sign,' quoth the grisly elf,
'That is made with bloody hands.'

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear, —
'And if there's blood upon his hand,
'T is but the blood of deer.'

'Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand.'

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign, —
'And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

'And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By Him whom demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?'

XV

BALLAD CONTINUED

''T is merry, 't is merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,

When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

'And gaily shines the Fairy-land —
But all is glistening show,[1]
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

'And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

'It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And 'twixt life and death was snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower.[2]

'But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine.'

She crossed him once — she crossed him twice —
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

[1] See Note 55. [2] See Note 56.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI

Just as the minstrel sounds were stayed,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting-suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims —
'T is Snowdoun's Knight, 't is James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream:
'O stranger! in such hour of fear
What evil hap has brought thee here?'
'An evil hap how can it be
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning-tide,
And marshalled over bank and bourne
The happy path of my return.'

'The happy path! — what! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?' 'No, by my faith!
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe.'
'O haste thee, Allan, to the kern:
Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure! —
What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed, by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here.'

XVII

'Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath
When love or honour's weighed with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled,
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,

I'll guard thee like a tender flower —'
'O hush, Sir Knight! 't were female art,
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on! —
One way remains — I'll tell him all —
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first — my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me, 't were infamy to wed.
Still wouldst thou speak? — then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth
If yet he is! — exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity —
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart!'

XVIII

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,

But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopless agony,
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffered to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.
'O little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn
If thou mayst trust yon wily kern.'
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
He paused, and turned, and came again.

XIX

'Hear, lady, yet a parting word! —
It chanced in fight that my poor sword

Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand — the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the King without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way:
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me.'
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused — kissed her hand — and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

XX

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high —
'Murdoch! was that a signal cry?'
He stammered forth, 'I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare.'
He looked — he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed: 'Ah! gallant grey!
For thee — for me, perchance — 't were well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.
Murdoch, move first — but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!'
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.

Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,
For then the Lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung —
She sung! — the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
And now, though strained and roughened, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII

SONG

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
  They say my brain is warped and wrung —
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
  I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my wintry day!

'T was thus my hair they bade me braid,
They made me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn, they said,
And my true love would meet me there.
But woe betide the cruel guile
That drowned in blood the morning smile!
And woe betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII

'Who is this maid? what means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle grey,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring.'
"T is Blanche of Devan,' Murdoch said,
'A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick forayed Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.
Hence, brain-sick fool!' — He raised his bow: —
'Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitched a bar!'

'Thanks, champion, thanks!' the Maniac cried,
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
'See the grey pennons I prepare,
To seek my true love through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume!
No! — deep amid disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his bones,
And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid-air stayed,
Wave forth a banner fair and free,
Meet signal for their revelry.'

XXIV

'Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!'
'O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green;
And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

'For O my sweet William was forester true,
He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
And so blithely he trilled the Lowland lay!

'It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise and guessest well.'

Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the Clansman fearfully
She fixed her apprehensive eye,
Then turned it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV

'The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set, —
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

'It was a stag, a stag of ten,[1]
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen, —
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

'It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warned him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

'He had an eye, and he could heed, —
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could speed, —
Hunters watch so narrowly.'

[1] Having ten branches on his antlers.

XXVI

Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
'Disclose thy treachery, or die!'
Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast. —
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need;
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife —
The forfeit death — the prize is life;
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach! — it may not be —
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee! —
Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;

With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die,
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII

She sat beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laughed;
Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The Knight to staunch the life-stream tried, —
'Stranger, it is in vain!' she cried.
'This hour of death has given me more
Of reason's power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye
That thou wert mine avenger born.
Seest thou this tress? — O, still I've worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,

But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.
I will not tell thee when 't was shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's head, —
My brain would turn! — but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.
I waver still. — O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light! —
O, by thy knighthood's honoured sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's Clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong! —
They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell!'

XXVIII

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast poured his eyes at pity's claims;
And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murdered maid expire.
'God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!'

A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
And placed it on his bonnet-side:
'By Him whose word is truth, I swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu! —
But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
The chase is up, — but they shall know,
The stag at bay 's a dangerous foe.'
Barred from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turned back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er: —
'Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guessed
That all this Highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune? —
Like bloodhounds now they search me out, —
Hark, to the whistle and the shout! —

If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe:
I'll couch me here till evening grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous way.'

XXIX

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
And not the summer solstice there
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze that swept the wold
Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned.

XXX

Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked in his plaid a mountaineer;
And up he sprung with sword in hand, —
'Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!'
'A stranger.' 'What dost thou require?'
'Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost.'
'Art thou a friend to Roderick?' 'No.'
'Thou dar'st not call thyself a foe?'
'I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand.'
'Bold words! — but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?[1]
Thus treacherous scouts, — yet sure they lie,
Who say thou cam'st a secret spy!'
'They do, by heaven! — come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest.'

[1] See Note 57.

'If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight.'
'Then by these tokens mayst thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe.'
'Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.'

XXXI

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;[1]
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech addressed: —
'Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true:
Each word against his honour spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke;
Yet more, — upon thy fate, 't is said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn, —
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws;

[1] See Note 58.

To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword.'
'I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 't is nobly given!'
'Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby.'
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COMBAT

I

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain-side, —
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of War.

II

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,

And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain grey.
A wildering path! — they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gained not the length of horseman's lance.
'T was oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew, —
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

III

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
A hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak

Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrent down had borne,
And heaped upon the cumbered land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV

'Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell,' the Saxon said,
'I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;

Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep perchance the villain lied.'
'Yet why a second venture try?'
'A warrior thou, and ask me why! —
Moves our free course by such fixed cause
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide, —
A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,
The merry glance of mountain maid;
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone.'

V

'Thy secret keep, I urge thee not; —
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar?'
'No, by my word; — of bands prepared
To guard King James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,

Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.'
'Free be they flung! for we were loath
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung! — as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewildered in the mountain-game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?'
'Warrior, but yester-morn I knew
Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlawed desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight;
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart.'

VI

Wrathful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lowered the clansman's sable scowl,
A space he paused, then sternly said,
'And heardst thou why he drew his blade?
Heardst thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What recked the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath or Holy-Rood?

He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven.'
'Still was it outrage; — yet, 't is true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his due;
While Albany with feeble hand
Held borrowed truncheon of command,
The young King, mewed in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.[1]
But then, thy Chieftain's robber life! —
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruined Lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain, —
Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne.'

VII

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answered with disdainful smile:
'Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I marked thee send delighted eye
Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between: —
These fertile plains, that softened vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;

[1] See Note 59.

The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread
For fattened steer or household bread,
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply, —
"To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blade must win the rest."
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul! — While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain,
While of ten thousand herds there strays
But one along yon river's maze, —
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall with strong hand redeem his share.[1]
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
That plundering Lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu.'

1 See Note 60.

VIII

Answered Fitz-James: 'And, if I sought,
Think'st thou no other could be brought?
What deem ye of my path waylaid?
My life given o'er to ambuscade?'
'As of a meed to rashness due:
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true, —
I seek my hound or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a Highland maid, —
Free hadst thou been to come and go;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet for this, even as a spy,
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
Save to fulfil an augury.'
'Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride:
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace; but when I come again,
I come with banner, brand, and bow,
As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For love-lorn swain in lady's bower
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his band!'

IX

'Have then thy wish!' — He whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood and still.
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,

Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James: 'How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon, — I am Roderick Dhu!'

X

Fitz-James was brave: — though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before: —
'Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.'
Sir Roderick marked, — and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foeman worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood — then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;

It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air
Pennon and plaid and plumage fair, —
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide:
The sun's last glance was glinted back
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack;
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green and cold grey stone.

XI

Fitz-James looked round, — yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the Chief replied:
'Fear nought — nay, that I need not say —
But — doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest; — I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clansman's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on; — I only meant

To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.'[1]
They moved; — I said Fitz-James was brave
As ever knight that belted glaive,
Yet dare not say that now his blood
Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet by fearful proof was rife
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonoured and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanished guardians of the ground,
And still from copse and heather deep
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

[1] See Note 61.

XII

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,[1]
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.
And here his course the Chieftain stayed,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said:
'Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here all vantageless I stand,[2]
Armed like thyself with single brand;
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword.'

[1] See Note 62. [2] See Note 63.

XIII

The Saxon paused: 'I ne'er delayed,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death;
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:
Can nought but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?' 'No, stranger, none!
And hear, — to fire thy flagging zeal, —
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead:
"Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife."'
'Then, by my word,' the Saxon said,
'The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff, —
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy;
Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James at Stirling let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath, and word

That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand
That aids thee now to guard thy land.'

XIV

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye:
'Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate; —
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Not yet prepared? — By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair.'
'I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone! —
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,

Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not — doubt not — which thou wilt —
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.'
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each looked to sun and stream and plain
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then foot and point and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,[1]
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.[2]
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,

[1] See Note 64. [2] See Note 65.

And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock or castle-roof
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI

'Now yield thee, or by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!'
'Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die.' [1]
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Received, but recked not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel
Through bars of brass and triple steel!
They tug, they strain! down, down they go,

[1] See Note 66.

The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted on his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!
But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII

He faltered thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife:
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid, —
'Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid;

Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valour give.'
With that he blew a bugle note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sat down his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead
By loosened rein a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse, —
With wonder viewed the bloody spot.
'Exclaim not, gallants! question not.
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high: — I must be boune
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII

'Stand, Bayard, stand!' — the steed obeyed,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup stayed,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turned on the horse his armèd heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sat erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launched, along the plain they go.
They dashed that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop pricked the Knight,
His merrymen followed as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith, they ride,
And in the rāce they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,

They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career look down.

XIX

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung: —
'Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
Who townward holds the rocky way,
Of stature tall and poor array?
Mark'st thou the firm yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain side?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?'
'No, by my word; — a burly groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A baron's train would nobly grace.'
'Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,

And jealousy, no sharper eye?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew;
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'T is James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
The uncle of the banished Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his guard;
Douglas and he must meet prepared.'
Then right-hand wheeled their steeds, and straight
They won the Castle's postern gate.

XX

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-kenneth's abbey grey,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself: —
'Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate, —
God grant the ransom come not late!
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven; —

Be pardoned one repining tear!
For He who gave her knows how dear,
How excellent! — but that is by,
And now my business is — to die.
Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
And thou, O sad and fatal mound![1]
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand, —
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare — for Douglas seeks his doom!
But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
And see! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet!
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.[2]
James will be there; he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park,

[1] See Note 67. [2] See Note 68.

And play my prize; — King James shall mark
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft in happier days
His boyish wonder loved to praise.'

XXI

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering drawbridge rocked and rung,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the courser's clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low
To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain, —
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims, —
'Long live the Commons' King, King James!'
Behind the King thronged peer and knight,

And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
And the mean burgher's joys disdained;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banished man,
There thought upon their own grey tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deemed themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their checkered bands the joyous rout.
There morricers, with bell at heel
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,[1] —
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,

[1] See Note 69.

In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might, —
His first shaft centred in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy, —
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.[1]

XXIII

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes, —
Nor called in vain, for Douglas came.
For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bare.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,[2]
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast

[1] See Note 70. [2] See Note 71.

His struggling soul his words suppressed;
Indignant then he turned him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky
A rood beyond the farthest mark;
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-haired sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas cast,
And moralise on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.
The King, with look unmoved, bestowed
A purse well filled with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now with anxious wonder scan,
And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong.

The old men marked and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And winked aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wrecked by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmurs rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or called the banished man to mind;
No, not from those who at the chase
Once held his side the honoured place,
Begirt his board, and in the field
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known!

XXV

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,

Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free and Bourdeaux wine
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra, — whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North, —
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds midway,
And dashing on the antlered prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The king's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and with his leash unbound
In anger struck the noble hound.
The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
In maiden glee with garlands deck;
They were such playmates that with name
Of Lufra Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darkened brow and flashing eye;

As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI

Then clamoured loud the royal train,
And brandished swords and staves amain,
But stern the Baron's warning: 'Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas. — Yes! behold,
King James! The Douglas, doomed of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war,
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends.'
'Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous Lord!' the Monarch said:
'Of thy misproud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know;
But shall a Monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow and haughty look?
What ho! the Captain of our Guard!

Give the offender fitting ward.
Break off the sports!' — for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows, —
'Break off the sports!' he said and frowned,
'And bid our horsemen clear the ground.'

XXVII

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marred the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen pricked among the crowd,
Repelled by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway steep,
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The Commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said:
'Sir John of Hyndford, 't was my blade,
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed permit me then
A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII

'Hear, gentle friends, ere yet for me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire?
Or if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those cords of love I should unbind
Which knit my country and my kind?
O no! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread
For me in kindred gore are red:
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
For me that mother wails her son,
For me that widow's mate expires,
For me that orphans weep their sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!'

XXIX

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed
For blessings on his generous head
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men upon the verge of life
Blessed him who stayed the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire.
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resigned his honoured charge.

XXX

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
'O Lenox, who would wish to rule

This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou,' he said, 'the loud acclaim
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim the vulgar throat
Strained for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hailed the day
When first I broke the Douglas sway;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy king?

XXXI

'But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar —
What from our cousin, John of Mar?'
'He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
Within the safe and guarded ground;
For some foul purpose yet unknown, —
Most sure for evil to the throne, —

The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summoned his rebellious crew;
'T is said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand arrayed.
The Earl of Mar this morn from Doune
To break their muster marched, and soon
Your Grace will hear of battle fought;
But earnestly the Earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride.'

XXXII

'Thou warn'st me I have done amiss, —
I should have earlier looked to this;
I lost it in this bustling day.
Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
We do forbid the intended war;
Roderick this morn in single fight
Was made our prisoner by a knight,
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,

For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly!'
He turned his steed, — 'My liege, I hie,
Yet ere I cross this lily lawn
I fear the broadswords will be drawn.'
The turf the flying courser spurned,
And to his towers the King returned.

XXXIII

Ill with King James's mood that day
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the saddened town
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumoured feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms; — the Douglas too,
They mourned him pent within the hold,
'Where stout Earl William was of old.'[1]
And there his word the speaker stayed,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen from the west
At evening to the Castle pressed,

[1] Stabbed by James II in Stirling Castle.

And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD-ROOM

I

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's glance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and O, what scenes of woe,
Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospital beholds it stream;
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,

While drums with rolling note foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barred,
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air,
Deadened the torches' yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blackened stone,
And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deformed with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fevered with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
Showed in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
Some laboured still their thirst to quench;
Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim

Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,[1]
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air;
The Fleming there despised the soil
That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
Their rolls showed French and German name;
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well-trained to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;
In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage fierce and uncontrolled;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and mid their words
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear

[1] See Note 72.

Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs and bodies gored
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard, —
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke! —
At length up started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved that day their games cut short,
And marred the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, 'Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear.'

V

SOLDIER'S SONG

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;

Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches, — and why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
And 't is right of his office poor laymen to lurch
Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Stayed in mid-roar the merry shout.
A soldier to the portal went, —
'Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
And — beat for jubilee the drum! —
A maid and minstrel with him come.'
Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarred,
Was entering now the Court of Guard,
A harper with him, and, in plaid

All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
'What news?' they roared: — 'I only know,
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untamable
As the rude mountains where they dwell;
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast.'
'But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.' [1]

VII

'No comrade; — no such fortune mine.
After the fight these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm.'
'Hear ye his boast?' cried John of Brent,

[1] See Note 73.

Ever to strife and jangling bent;
'Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?
I 'll have my share howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee.'
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepped between,
And dropped at once the tartan screen: —
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May through summer tears.
The savage soldiery, amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;
Even hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII

Boldly she spoke: 'Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend,
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant or the strong
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong.'
Answered De Brent, most forward still

In every feat or good or ill:
'I shame me of the part I played;
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose, — if Rose be living now,' —
He wiped his iron eye and brow, —
'Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
Hear ye, my mates! I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall:
There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough;
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough.'

IX

Their Captain came, a gallant young, —
Of Tullibardine's house he sprung, —
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye: — and yet, in sooth,

Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
'Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?'
Her dark eye flashed; — she paused and sighed:—
'O what have I to do with pride! —
Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James.'

X

The signet-ring young Lewis took
With deep respect and altered look,
And said: 'This ring our duties own;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed.

Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you meanwhile in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way.'
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took,
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold: —
'Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O, forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I 'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar.'
With thanks — 't was all she could — the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent: —

'My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I, — to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the Chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must soothe the infant heir,
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our verse —
A doleful tribute! — o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right, — deny it not!'
'Little we reck,' said John of Brent,
'We Southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name — a word —
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part, —
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer
More than to guide the labouring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.

Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see.'

XII

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they passed, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many a hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint and crushing limb,
By artists formed who deemed it shame
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They entered: — 't was a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor,
Such as the rugged days of old

Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
'Here,' said De Brent, 'thou mayst remain
Till the Leech visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well.'
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wandering Minstrel looked, and knew —
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought.

XIII

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand, —
So on his couch lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat; —
O, how unlike her course at sea!
Or his free step on hill and lea!

Soon as the Minstrel he could scan, —
'What of thy lady? — of my clan? —
My mother? — Douglas? — tell me all!
Have they been ruined in my fall?
Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
Yet speak, — speak boldly, — do not fear.'
For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too.
'Who fought? — who fled? — Old man, be brief; —
Some might, — for they had lost their Chief.
Who basely live? — who bravely died?'
'O, calm thee, Chief!' the Minstrel cried,
'Ellen is safe!' 'For that thank Heaven!'
'And hopes are for the Douglas given; —
The Lady Margaret, too, is well;
And, for thy clan, — on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent.'

XIV

The Chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Checkered his swarthy brow and cheeks.
'Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,

With measure bold on festal day,
In yon lone isle, — again where ne'er
Shall harper play or warrior hear! —
That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.
Strike it! — and then, — for well thou canst, -
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.[1]
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soared from battle fray.'
The trembling Bard with awe obeyed, —
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witnessed from the mountain's height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awakened the full power of song,
And bore him in career along; —
As shallop launched on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

[1] See Note 74.

XV

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE[1]

'The Minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
For ere he parted he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch Achray —
Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand! —
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake,
Upon her eyry nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound,
That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
The sun's retiring beams?

[1] See Note 75.

I see the dagger-crest of Mar
I see the Moray's silver star,
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!
To hero boune for battle-strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'T were worth ten years of peaceful life,
One glance at their array!

XVI

'Their light-armed archers far and near
Surveyed the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frowned,
Their barded horsemen in the rear
The stern battalia crowned.
No symbol clashed, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
That shadowed o'er their road.
Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe,

Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirred the roe;
The host moves like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High-swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is passed, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII

'At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that fell
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their flight they ply —
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;

Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood?
"Down, down," cried Mar, "your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!"
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levelled low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.
"We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel[1] cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame."

XVIII

'Bearing before them in their course
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurled them on the foe.

[1] See Note 76.

I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
As if a hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheeled his rearward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank, —
"My banner-men, advance!
I see," he cried, "their column shake.
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!"
The horsemen dashed among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne —
Where, where was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.
And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was poured;
Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanished the mountain-sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in,

So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX

'Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within. —
Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on; its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.
Gray Benvenue I soon repassed,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set; — the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk again.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge,
Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,

Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes — the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged again,
But not in mingled tide;
The plaided warriors of the North
High on the mountain thunder forth
And overhang its side,
While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shattered band,
Eying their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tattered sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havoc of the day.

XX

'Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried: "Behold yon isle! —
See! none are left to guard its strand
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'T is there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile; —

My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
And loose a shallop from the shore.
Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den."
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
On earth his casque and corselet rung,
He plunged him in the wave: —
All saw the deed, — the purpose knew,
And to their clamours Benvenue
A mingled echo gave;
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'T was then, as by the outcry riven,
Poured down at once the lowering heaven:
A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
Her billows reared their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
For round him showered, mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.
In vain. — He nears the isle — and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;
I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame,

Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleamed in her hand: —
It darkened, — but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan; —
Another flash! — the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood. .

XXI

'"Revenge! revenge!" the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and from a crag
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch's name, afar
A herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord and Roderick bold
Were both, he said, in captive hold.' —
But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy

How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy:
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand kept feeble time;
That motion ceased, — yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length, no more his deafened ear
The minstrel melody can hear;
His face grows sharp, — his hands are clenche
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fixed on vacancy;
Thus, motionless and moanless drew,
His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu! —
Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit passed;
But when he saw that life was fled,
He poured his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII

LAMENT

'And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say? —
For thee, who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,

The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honoured Pine!

'What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.
O, woe for Alpine's honoured Pine!

'Sad was thy lot on mortal stage! —
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured Pine.'

XXIII

Ellen the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,
Where played, with many-coloured gleams,

Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lightened up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or if she looked, 't was but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claimed with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.
Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head,
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour?
'T was from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

'My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

'I hate to learn the ebb of time
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing,
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.

'No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,

While fled the eve on wing of glee, —
That life is lost to love and me!'

XXV

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The listener had not turned her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
'O welcome, brave Fitz-James!' she said;
'How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt —' 'O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lay his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come! 't is more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime.'
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;

Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till at his touch its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI

Within 't was brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And from their tissue fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who owned this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate! —
She gazed on many a princely port
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed, —
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and in the room
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent,
On him each courtier's eye was bent;

Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring, —
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King![1]

XXVII

As wreath of snow on mountain-breast
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands, —
She showed the ring, — she clasped her hands.
O, not a moment could he brook,
The generous Prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her, — and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed: —
'Yes, fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask nought for Douglas; — yester even,
His Prince and he have much forgiven;
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.

[1] See Note 77.

We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided and our laws.
I staunched thy father's death-feud stern
With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn;
And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our throne. —
But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid.'

XXVIII

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power, —
When it can say with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye
On nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepped between — 'Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 't is my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.

Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'T is under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils, — for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,[1]
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause.'
Then, in a tone apart and low, —
'Ah, little traitress! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Benvenue
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!'
Aloud he spoke: 'Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring, —
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?'

XXIX

Full well the conscious maiden guessed
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But with that consciousness there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,

[1] See Note 78.

And more she deemed the Monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him who for her sire
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
'Forbear thy suit; — the King of kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings.
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand; —
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live! —
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?'
Blushing, she turned her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek.
'Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!' — and, at the word,
Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
'For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought amid thy faithful clan
A refuge for an outlawed man,

Dishonouring thus thy loyal name. —
Fetters and warder for the Græme!'
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone. —
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
  Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'T is now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
  'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
  Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell;
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
  A wandering witch-note of the distant spell —
And now, 't is silent all! — Enchantress, fare thee
    well!

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

INTRODUCTION

THERE is a mood of mind we all have known
On drowsy eve or dark and lowering day,
When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone
And nought can chase the lingering hours away.
Dull on our soul falls Fancy's dazzling ray,
And Wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of pain?

The jolly sportsman knows such drearihood
When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
Clouding that morn which threats the heath-cock's brood;
Of such in summer's drought the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain;
But more than all the discontented fair,
Whom father stern and sterner aunt restrain
From county-ball or race occurring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.

Ennui! — or, as our mothers called thee, Spleen!
To thee we owe full many a rare device; —
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
The rolling billiard-ball, the rattling dice,
The turning lathe for framing gimcrack nice;
The amateur's blotched pallet thou mayst claim,
Retort, and air-pump, threatening frogs and mice —
Murders disguised by philosophic name —
And much of trifling grave and much of buxom game.

Then of the books to catch thy drowsy glance
Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote!
Plays, poems, novels, never read but once; —
But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
That bears thy name and is thine antidote;
And not of such the strain my Thomson sung,
Delicious dreams inspiring by his note,
What time to Indolence his harp he strung; —
O, might my lay be ranked that happier list among!

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
For me, I love my study-fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale,
Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme;
While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,

Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the romancer's tale becomes the reader's dream.

'T is thus my malady I well may bear,
Albeit outstretched, like Pope's own Paridel,
Upon the rack of a too-easy chair;
And find to cheat the time a powerful spell
In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
Or later legends of the Fairy-folk,
Or Oriental tale of Afrite fell,
Of Genii, Talisman, and broad-winged Roc,
Though taste may blush and frown, and sober reason
mock.

Oft at such season too will rhymes unsought
Arrange themselves in some romantic lay,
The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day.
These few survive — and, proudly let me say,
Gourt not the critic's smile nor dread his frown;
They well may serve to while an hour away,
Nor does the volume ask for more renown
Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it
down.

CANTO FIRST

I

List to the valorous deeds that were done
By Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son!

Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.
Woe to the realms which he coasted! for there
Was shedding of blood and rending of hair,
Rape of maiden and slaughter of priest,
Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast:
When he hoisted his standard black,
Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
And he burned the churches, that heathen Dane,
To light his band to their barks again.

II

On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
The winds of France had his banners blown;
Little was there to plunder, yet still
His pirates had forayed on Scottish hill:
But upon merry England's coast
More frequent he sailed, for he won the most.

So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
If a sail but gleamed white 'gainst the welkin blue,
Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
Burghers hastened to man the wall,
Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
Bells were tolled out, and aye as they rung
Fearful and faintly the grey brothers sung,
'Bless us, Saint Mary, from flood and from fire,
From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire!'

III

He liked the wealth of fair England so well
That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
He entered the Humber in fearful hour
And disembarked with his Danish power.
Three earls came against him with all their train, —
Two hath he taken and one hath he slain.
Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
And he wasted and warred in Northumberland.
But the Saxon king was a sire in age,
Weak in battle, in council sage;
Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
Gifts he gave and quiet he bought;
And the count took upon him the peaceable style
Of a vassal and liegeman of Briton's broad isle.

IV

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
Time will consume the strongest cord;
That which moulders hemp and steel
Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
Of the Danish band whom Count Witikind led
Many waxed aged and many were dead:
Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
Wrinkled his brows grew and hoary his hair;
He leaned on a staff when his step went abroad,
And patient his palfrey when steed he bestrode.
As he grew feebler, his wildness ceased,
He made himself peace with prelate and priest,
Made his peace, and stooping his head,
Patiently listed the counsel they said:
Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy and grave,
Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

V

'Thou hast murdered, robbed, and spoiled,
Time it is thy poor soul were assoiled;
Priests didst thou slay and churches burn,
Time it is now to repentance to turn;
Fiends hast thou worshipped with fiendish rite,
Leave now the darkness and wend into light;

O, while life and space are given,
Turn thee yet, and think of Heaven!'
That stern old heathen his head he raised,
And on the good prelate he steadfastly gazed;
'Give me broad lands on the Wear and the Tyne,
My faith I will leave and I'll cleave unto thine.'

VI

Broad lands he gave him on Tyne and Wear,
To be held of the church by bridle and spear,
Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tynedale part,
To better his will and to soften his heart:
Count Witikind was a joyful man,
Less for the faith than the lands that he wan.
The high church of Durham is dressed for the day,
The clergy are ranked in their solemn array:
There came the count, in a bear-skin warm,
Leaning on Hilda his concubine's arm.
He kneeled before Saint Cuthbert's shrine
With patience unwonted at rites divine;
He abjured the gods of heathen race
And he bent his head at the font of grace.
But such was the grisly old proselyte's look,
That the priest who baptised him grew pale and shook;
And the old monks muttered beneath their hood,
'Of a stem so stubborn can never spring good!'

VII

Up then arose that grim convertite,
Homeward he hied him when ended the rite;
The prelate in honour will with him ride
And feast in his castle on Tyne's fair side.
Banners and banderols danced in the wind,
Monks rode before them and spearmen behind;
Onward they passed, till fairly did shine
Pennon and cross on the bosom of Tyne;
And full in front did that fortress lour
In darksome strength with its buttress and tower:
At the castle gate was young Harold there,
Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.

VIII

Young Harold was feared for his hardihood,
His strength of frame and his fury of mood.
Rude he was and wild to behold,
Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
Cap of vair nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal day:
His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
Uncovered his head and his sandal unlaced:
His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
And his eyes glanced through them a swarthy glow;
A Danish club in his hand he bore,

The spikes were clotted with recent gore;
At his back a she-wolf and her wolf-cubs twain,
In the dangerous chase that morning slain.
Rude was the greeting his father he made,
None to the bishop, — while thus he said: —

IX

'What priest-led hypocrite art thou
With thy humbled look and thy monkish brow,
Like a shaveling who studies to cheat his vow?
Canst thou be Witikind the Waster known,
Royal Eric's fearless son,
Haughty Gunhilda's haughtier lord,
Who won his bride by the axe and sword;
From the shrine of Saint Peter the chalice who tore,
And melted to bracelets for Freya and Thor;
With one blow of his gauntlet who burst the skull,
Before Odin's stone, of the Mountain Bull?
Then ye worshipped with rites that to war-gods belong,
With the deed of the brave and the blow of the strong;
And now, in thine age to dotage sunk,
Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a shaven monk,
Lay down thy mail-shirt for clothing of hair, —
Fasting and scourge, like a slave, wilt thou bear?
Or, at best, be admitted in slothful bower
To batten with priest and with paramour?
O, out upon thine endless shame!

Each Scald's high harp shall blast thy fame,
And thy son will refuse thee a father's name!'

X

Ireful waxed old Witikind's look,
His faltering voice with fury shook: —
'Hear me, Harold of hardened heart!
Stubborn and wilful ever thou wert.
Thine outrage insane I command thee to cease,
Fear my wrath and remain at peace: —
Just is the debt of repentance I've paid,
Richly the church has a recompense made,
And the truth of her doctrines I prove with my blade,
But reckoning to none of my actions I owe,
And least to my son such accounting will show.
Why speak I to thee of repentance or truth,
Who ne'er from thy childhood knew reason or ruth?
Hence! to the wolf and the bear in her den;
These are thy mates, and not rational men.'

XI

Grimly smiled Harold and coldly replied,
'We must honour our sires, if we fear when they chide.
For me, I am yet what thy lessons have made,
I was rocked in a buckler and fed from a blade;
An infant, was taught to clasp hands and to sh

From the roofs of the tower when the flame had broke
out;
In the blood of slain foemen my finger to dip,
And tinge with its purple my cheek and my lip.
'T is thou know'st not truth, that hast bartered in eld
For a price the brave faith that thine ancestors held.
When this wolf' — and the carcass he flung on the
plain —
'Shall awake and give food to her nurslings again,
The face of his father will Harold review;
Till then, aged heathen, young Christian, adieu!'

XII

Priest, monk, and prelate stood aghast,
As through the pageant the heathen passed.
A cross-bearer out of his saddle he flung,
Laid his hand on the pommel and into it sprung.
Loud was the shriek and deep the groan
When the holy sign on the earth was thrown!
The fierce old count unsheathed his brand,
But the calmer prelate stayed his hand.
'Let him pass free! — Heaven knows its hour, —
But he must own repentance's power,
Pray and weep, and penance bear,
Ere he hold land by the Tyne and the Wear.'
Thus in scorn and in wrath from his father is gone
Young Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XIII

High was the feasting in Witikind's hall,
Revelled priests, soldiers, and pagans, and all;
And e'en the good bishop was fain to endure
The scandal which time and instruction might cure:
It were dangerous, he deemed, at the first to restrain
In his wine and his wassail a half-christened Dane.
The mead flowed around and the ale was drained dry,
Wild was the laughter, the song, and the cry;
With Kyrie Eleison came clamorously in
The war-songs of Danesmen, Norweyan, and Finn,
Till man after man the contention gave o'er,
Outstretched on the rushes that strewed the hall floor;
And the tempest within, having ceased its wild rout,
Gave place to the tempest that thundered without.

XIV

Apart from the wassail in turret alone
Lay flaxen-haired Gunnar, old Ermengarde's son;
In the train of Lord Harold that page was the first,
For Harold in childhood had Ermengarde nursed;
And grieved was young Gunnar his master should roam,
Unhoused and unfriended, an exile from home.
He heard the deep thunder, the plashing of rain,
He saw the red lightning through shot-hole and pane;

'And O!' said the page, 'on the shelterless wold
Lord Harold is wandering in darkness and cold!
What though he was stubborn and wayward and wild,
He endured me because I was Ermengarde's child,
And often from dawn till the set of the sun
In the chase by his stirrup unbidden I run;
I would I were older, and knighthood could bear,
I would soon quit the banks of the Tyne and the
Wear:
For my mother's command with her last parting breath
Bade me follow her nursling in life and to death.

XV

'It pours and it thunders, it lightens amain,
As if Lok the Destroyer had burst from his chain!
Accursed by the church and expelled by his sire,
Nor Christian nor Dane give him shelter or fire,
And this tempest what mortal may houseless endure?
Unaided, unmantled, he dies on the moor!
Whate'er comes of Gunnar, he tarries not here.'
He leapt from his couch and he grasped to his spear,
Sought the hall of the feast. Undisturbed by his tread,
The wassailers slept fast as the sleep of the dead:
'Ungrateful and bestial!' his anger broke forth,
'To forget 'mid your goblets the pride of the North!
And you, ye cowled priests, who have plenty in store,
Must give Gunnar for ransom a palfrey and ore.'

XVI

Then, heeding full little of ban or of curse,
He has seized on the Prior of Jorvaux's purse:
Saint Meneholt's Abbot next morning has missed
His mantle, deep furred from the cape to the wrist:
The seneschal's keys from his belt he has ta'en —
Well drenched on that eve was old Hildebrand's brain —
To the stable-yard he made his way
And mounted the bishop's palfrey gay,
Castle and hamlet behind him has cast
And right on his way to the moorland has passed.
Sore snorted the palfrey, unused to face
A weather so wild at so rash a pace;
So long he snorted, so long he neighed,
There answered a steed that was bound beside,
And the red flash of lightning showed there where lay
His master, Lord Harold, outstretched on the clay.

XVII

Up he started and thundered out, 'Stand!'
And raised the club in his deadly hand.
The flaxen-haired Gunnar his purpose told,
Showed the palfrey and proffered the gold.
'Back, back, and home, thou simple boy!
Thou canst not share my grief or joy:

Have I not marked thee wail and cry
When thou hast seen a sparrow die?
And canst thou, as my follower should,
Wade ankle-deep through foeman's blood,
Dare mortal and immortal foe,
The gods above, the fiends below,
And man on earth, more hateful still,
The very fountain-head of ill?
Desperate of life and careless of death,
Lover of bloodshed and slaughter and scathe,
Such must thou be with me to roam,
And such thou canst not be — back, and home!'

XVIII

Young Gunnar shook like an aspen bough,
As he heard the harsh voice and beheld the dark brow,
And half he repented his purpose and vow.
But now to draw back were bootless shame,
And he loved his master, so urged his claim:
'Alas! if my arm and my courage be weak,
Bear with me awhile for old Ermengarde's sake;
Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar's faith
As to fear he would break it for peril of death.
Have I not risked it to fetch thee this gold,
This surcoat and mantle to fence thee from cold?
And, did I bear a baser mind,
What lot remains if I stay behind?

The priests' revenge, thy father's wrath,
A dungeon, and a shameful death.'

XIX

With gentler look Lord Harold eyed
The page, then turned his head aside;
And either a tear did his eyelash stain,
Or it caught a drop of the passing rain.
'Art thou an outcast, then?' quoth he;
'The meeter page to follow me.'
'T were bootless to tell what climes they sought,
Ventures achieved, and battles fought;
How oft with few, how oft alone,
Fierce Harold's arm the field hath won.
Men swore his eye, that flashed so red
When each other glance was quenched with dread,
Bore oft a light of deadly flame
That ne'er from mortal courage came.
Those limbs so strong, that mood so stern,
That loved the couch of heath and fern,
Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
More than to rest on driven down;
That stubborn frame, that sullen mood,
Men deemed must come of aught but good;
And they whispered the great Master Fiend was at one
With Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XX

Years after years had gone and fled,
The good old prelate lies lapped in lead;
In the chapel still is shown
His sculptured form on a marble stone,
With staff and ring and scapulaire,
And folded hands in the act of prayer.
Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting now
On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldingar's brow;
The power of his crosier he loved to extend
O'er whatever would break or whatever would bend;
And now hath he clothed him in cope and in pall,
And the Chapter of Durham has met at his call.
'And hear ye not, brethren,' the proud bishop said,
'That our vassal, the Danish Count Witikind 's dead?
All his gold and his goods hath he given
To holy Church for the love of Heaven,
And hath founded a chantry with stipend and dole
That priests and that beadsmen may pray for his soul:
Harold his son is wandering abroad,
Dreaded by man and abhorred by God;
Meet it is not that such should heir
The lands of the Church on the Tyne and the Wear,
And at her pleasure her hallowed hands
May now resume these wealthy lands.'

XXI

Answered good Eustace, a canon old, —
'Harold is tameless and furious and bold;
Ever Renown blows a note of fame
And a note of fear when she sounds his name:
Much of bloodshed and much of scathe
Have been their lot who have waked his wrath.
Leave him these lands and lordships still,
Heaven in its hour may change his will;
But if reft of gold and of living bare,
An evil counsellor is despair.'
More had he said, but the prelate frowned,
And murmured his brethren who sate around,
And with one consent have they given their doom
That the Church should the lands of Saint Cuthbert resume.
So willed the prelate; and canon and dean
Gave to his judgment their loud amen.

CANTO SECOND

I

'T is merry in greenwood — thus runs the old lay —
In the gladsome month of lively May,
When the wild birds' song on stem and spray
  Invites to forest bower;
Then rears the ash his airy crest,
Then shines the birch in silver vest,
And the beech in glistening leaves is drest,
And dark between shows the oak's proud breast
  Like a chieftain's frowning tower;
Though a thousand branches join their screen,
Yet the broken sunbeams glance between
And tip the leaves with lighter green,
  With brighter tints the flower:
Dull is the heart that loves not then
The deep recess of the wildwood glen,
Where roe and red-deer find sheltering den
  When the sun is in his power.

II

Less merry perchance is the fading leaf
That follows so soon on the gathered sheaf
  When the greenwood loses the name;

Silent is then the forest bound,
Save the redbreast's note and the rustling sound
Of frost-nipt leaves that are dropping round,
Or the deep-mouthed cry of the distant hound
That opens on his game:
Yet then too I love the forest wide,
Whether the sun in splendour ride
And gild its many-coloured side,
Or whether the soft and silvery haze
In vapoury folds o'er the landscape strays,
And half involves the woodland maze,
Like an early widow's veil,
Where wimpling tissue from the gaze
The form half hides and half betrays
Of beauty wan and pale.

III

Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
Her father a rover of greenwood shade,
By forest statutes undismayed,
Who lived by bow and quiver;
Well known was Wulfstane's archery
By merry Tyne both on moor and lea,
Through wooded Weardale's glens so free,
Well beside Stanhope's wildwood tree,
And well on Ganlesse river.
Yet free though he trespassed on woodland game,

More known and more feared was the wizard fame
Of Jutta of Rookhope, the Outlaw's dame;
Feared when she frowned was her eye of flame,
More feared when in wrath she laughed;
For then, 't was said, more fatal true
To its dread aim her spell-glance flew
Than when from Wulfstane's bended yew
Sprung forth the grey-goose shaft.

IV

Yet had this fierce and dreaded pair,
So Heaven decreed, a daughter fair;
None brighter crowned the bed,
In Britain's bounds, of peer or prince,
Nor hath perchance a lovelier since
In this fair isle been bred.
And nought of fraud or ire or ill
Was known to gentle Metelill, —
A simple maiden she;
The spells in dimpled smile that lie,
And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
With the sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
Were her arms and witchery.
So young, so simple was she yet,
She scarce could childhood's joys forget,
And still she loved, in secret set
Beneath the greenwood tree,

To plait the rushy coronet
And braid with flowers her locks of jet,
As when in infancy; —
Yet could that heart so simple prove
The early dawn of stealing love:
Ah! gentle maid, beware!
The power who, now so mild a guest,
Gives dangerous yet delicious zest
To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest,
Let none his empire share.

V

One morn in kirtle green arrayed
Deep in the wood the maiden strayed,
And where a fountain sprung
She sate her down unseen to thread
The scarlet berry's mimic braid,
And while the beads she strung,
Like the blithe lark whose carol gay
Gives a good-morrow to the day,
So lightsomely she sung.

VI

SONG

'Lord William was born in gilded bower,
The heir of Wilton's lofty tower;
Yet better loves Lord William now

To roam beneath wild Rookhope's brow;
And William has lived where ladies fair
With gawds and jewels deck their hair,
Yet better loves the dew-drops still
That pearl the locks of Metelill.

'The pious palmer loves, iwis,
Saint Cuthbert's hallowed beads to kiss;
But I, though simple girl I be,
Might have such homage paid to me;
For did Lord William see me suit
This necklace of the bramble's fruit,
He fain — but must not have his will —
Would kiss the beads of Metelill.

'My nurse has told me many a tale,
How vows of love are weak and frail;
My mother says that courtly youth
By rustic maid means seldom sooth.
What should they mean? it cannot be
That such a warning 's meant for me,
For nought — O, nought of fraud or ill
Can William mean to Metelill!'

VII

Sudden she stops — and starts to feel
A weighty hand, a glove of steel,

Upon her shrinking shoulders laid;
Fearful she turned, and saw dismayed
A knight in plate and mail arrayed,
His crest and bearing worn and frayed,
His surcoat soiled and riven,
Formed like that giant race of yore
Whose long-continued crimes outwore
The sufferance of Heaven.
Stern accents made his pleasure known,
Though then he used his gentlest tone:
'Maiden,' he said, 'sing forth thy glee.
Start not — sing on — it pleases me.'

VIII

Secured within his powerful hold,
To bend her knee, her hands to fold,
Was all the maiden might;
And 'O, forgive,' she faintly said,
'The terrors of a simple maid,
If thou art mortal wight!
But if — of such strange tales are told —
Unearthly warrior of the wold,
Thou comest to chide mine accents bold,
My mother, Jutta, knows the spell
At noon and midnight pleasing well
The disembodied ear;
O, let her powerful charms atone

For aught my rashness may have done,
And cease thy grasp of fear.'
Then laughed the knight — his laughter's sound
Half in the hollow helmet drowned;
His barred visor then he raised,
And steady on the maiden gazed.
He smoothed his brows, as best he might,
To the dread calm of autumn night,
When sinks the tempest roar,
Yet still the cautious fishers eye
The clouds and fear the gloomy sky,
And haul their barks on shore.

IX

'Damsel,' he said, 'be wise, and learn
Matters of weight and deep concern:
From distant realms I come,
And wanderer long at length have planned
In this my native Northern land
To seek myself a home.
Nor that alone — a mate I seek;
She must be gentle, soft, and meek, —
No lordly dame for me;
Myself am something rough of mood
And feel the fire of royal blood,
And therefore do not hold it good
To match in my degree.

Then, since coy maidens say my face
Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
For a fair lineage to provide
'T is meet that my selected bride
  In lineaments be fair;
I love thine well — till now I ne'er
Looked patient on a face of fear,
But now that tremulous sob and tear
  Become thy beauty rare.
One kiss — nay, damsel, coy it not! —
And now go seek thy parents' cot,
And say a bridegroom soon I come
To woo my love and bear her home.'

X

Home sprung the maid without a pause,
As leveret 'scaped from greyhound's jaws;
But still she locked, howe'er distressed,
The secret in her boding breast;
Dreading her sire, who oft forbade
Her steps should stray to distant glade.
Night came — to her accustomed nook
Her distaff aged Jutta took,
And by the lamp's imperfect glow
Rough Wulfstane trimmed his shafts and bow.
Sudden and clamorous from the ground
Upstarted slumbering brach and hound;

Loud knocking next the lodge alarms
And Wulfstane snatches at his arms,
When open flew the yielding door
And that grim warrior pressed the floor.

XI

'All peace be here — What! none replies?
Dismiss your fears and your surprise.
'T is I — that maid hath told my tale, —
Or, trembler, did thy courage fail?
It recks not — it is I demand
Fair Metelill in marriage band;
Harold the Dauntless I, whose name
Is brave men's boast and caitiff's shame.'
The parents sought each other's eyes
With awe, resentment, and surprise:
Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt, began
The stranger's size and thews to scan;
But as he scanned his courage sunk,
And from unequal strife he shrunk,
Then forth to blight and blemish flies
The harmful curse from Jutta's eyes;
Yet, fatal howsoe'er, the spell
On Harold innocently fell!
And disappointment and amaze
Were in the witch's wildered gaze.

XII

But soon the wit of woman woke,
And to the warrior mild she spoke:
'Her child was all too young.' — 'A toy,
The refuge of a maiden coy.'
Again, 'A powerful baron's heir
Claims in her heart an interest fair.'
'A trifle — whisper in his ear
That Harold is a suitor here!'
Baffled at length she sought delay:
'Would not the knight till morning stay?
Late was the hour — he there might rest
Till morn, their lodge's honoured guest.'
Such were her words — her craft might cast
Her honoured guest should sleep his last:
'No, not to-night — but soon,' he swore,
'He would return, nor leave them more.'
The threshold then his huge stride crost,
And soon he was in darkness lost.

XIII

Appalled awhile the parents stood,
Then changed their fear to angry mood,
And foremost fell their words of ill
On unresisting Metelill:
Was she not cautioned and forbid,
Forewarned, implored, accused, and chid,

And must she still to greenwood roam
To marshal such misfortune home?
'Hence, minion — to thy chamber hence —
There prudence learn and penitence.'
She went — her lonely couch to steep
In tears which absent lovers weep;
Or if she gained a troubled sleep,
Fierce Harold's suit was still the theme
And terror of her feverish dream.

XIV

Scarce was she gone, her dame and sire
Upon each other bent their ire;
'A woodsman thou and hast a spear,
And couldst thou such an insult bear?'
Sullen he said, 'A man contends
With men, a witch with sprites and fiends;
Not to mere mortal wight belong
Yon gloomy brow and frame so strong.
But thou — is this thy promise fair,
That your Lord William, wealthy heir
To Ulrick, Baron of Witton-le-Wear,
Should Metelill to altar bear?
Do all the spells thou boast'st as thine
Serve but to slay some peasant's kine,
His grain in autumn's storms to steep,
Or thorough fog and fen to sweep

And hag-ride some poor rustic's sleep?
Is such mean mischief worth the fame
Of sorceress and witch's name?
Fame, which with all men's wish conspires,
With thy deserts and my desires,
To damn thy corpse to penal fires?
Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
What now shall put thy schemes in joint?
What save this trusty arrow's point,
From the dark dingle when it flies
And he who meets it gasps and dies?'

XV

Stern she replied, 'I will not wage
War with thy folly or thy rage;
But ere the morrow's sun be low,
Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know
If I can venge me on a foe.
Believe the while that whatsoe'er
I spoke in ire of bow and spear,
It is not Harold's destiny
The death of pilfered deer to die.
But he, and thou, and yon pale moon —
That shall be yet more pallid soon,
Before she sink behind the dell —
Thou, she, and Harold too, shall tell
What Jutta knows of charm or spell.'

Thus muttering, to the door she bent
Her wayward steps and forth she went,
And left alone the moody sire
To cherish or to slake his ire.

XVI

Far faster than belonged to age
Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
A priest has met her as she passed,
And crossed himself and stood aghast:
She traced a hamlet — not a cur
His throat would ope, his foot would stir;
By crouch, by trembling, and by groan,
They made her hated presence known!
But when she trode the sable fell,
Were wilder sounds her way to tell, —
For far was heard the fox's yell,
The black-cock waked and faintly crew,
Screamed o'er the moss the scared curlew;
Where o'er the cataract the oak
Lay slant, was heard the raven's croak;
The mountain-cat which sought his prey
Glared, screamed, and started from her way.
Such music cheered her journey lone
To the deep dell and rocking stone:
There with unhallowed hymn of praise
She called a god of heathen days.

XVII

INVOCATION

'From thy Pomeranian throne,
Hewn in rock of living stone,
Where, to thy godhead faithful yet,
Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
And their swords in vengeance whet,
That shall make thine altars wet,
Wet and red for ages more
With the Christian's hated gore, —
Hear me, Sovereign of the Rock!
Hear me, mighty Zernebock!

'Mightiest of the mighty known,
Here thy wonders have been shown;
Hundred tribes in various tongue
Oft have here thy praises sung;
Down that stone with Runic seamed
Hundred victims' blood hath streamed!
Now one woman comes alone
And but wets it with her own,
The last, the feeblest of thy flock, —
Hear — and be present, Zernebock!

'Hark! he comes! the night-blast cold
Wilder sweeps along the wold;

The cloudless moon grows dark and dim,
And bristling hair and quaking limb
Proclaim the Master Demon nigh, —
Those who view his form shall die!
Lo! I stoop and veil my head;
Thou who ridest the tempest dread,
Shaking hill and rending oak —
Spare me! spare me, Zernebock!

'He comes not yet! Shall cold delay
Thy votaress at her need repay?
Thou — shall I call thee god or fiend? —
Let others on thy mood attend
With prayer and ritual — Jutta's arms
Are necromantic words and charms;
Mine is the spell that uttered once
Shall wake thy Master from his trance,
Shake his red mansion-house of pain
And burst his seven-times-twisted chain! —
So! com'st thou ere the spell is spoke?
I own thy presence, Zernebock.'

XVIII

'Daughter of dust,' the Deep Voice said —
Shook while it spoke the vale for dread,
Rocked on the base that massive stone,
The Evil Deity to own, —

'Daughter of dust! not mine the power
Thou seek'st on Harold's fatal hour.
'Twixt heaven and hell there is a strife
Waged for his soul and for his life,
And fain would we the combat win
And snatch him in his hour of sin.
There is a star now rising red
That threats him with an influence dread:
Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
To use the space before it set.
Involve him with the church in strife,
Push on adventurous chance his life;
Ourself will in the hour of need,
As best we may, thy counsels speed.'
So ceased the Voice; for seven leagues round
Each hamlet started at the sound,
But slept again as slowly died
Its thunders on the hill's brown side.

XIX

'And is this all,' said Jutta stern,
'That thou canst teach and I can learn?
Hence! to the land of fog and waste,
There fittest is thine influence placed,
Thou powerless, sluggish Deity!
But ne'er shall Briton bend the knee
Again before so poor a god.'

She struck the altar with her rod;
Slight was the touch as when at need
A damsel stirs her tardy steed;
But to the blow the stone gave place,
And, starting from its balanced base,
Rolled thundering down the moonlight dell, —
Re-echoed moorland, rock, and fell;
Into the moonlight tarn it dashed,
Their shores the sounding surges lashed,
And there was ripple, rage, and foam;
But on that lake, so dark and lone,
Placid and pale the moonbeam shone
As Jutta hied her home.

CANTO THIRD

I

GREY towers of Durham! there was once a time
I viewed your battlements with such vague hope
As brightens life in its first dawning prime;
Not that e'en then came within fancy's scope
A vision vain of mitre, throne, or cope;
Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
Her flattering dreams would in perspective ope
Some reverend room, some prebendary's stall, —
And thus Hope me deceived as she deceiveth all.

Well yet I love thy mixed and massive piles,
Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,
And long to roam these venerable aisles,
With records stored of deeds long since forgot;
There might I share my Surtees' happier lot,
Who leaves at will his patrimonial field
To ransack every crypt and hallowed spot,
And from oblivion rend the spoils they yield,
Restoring priestly chant and clang of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish — since other cares demand
Each vacant hour, and in another clime;

But still that northern harp invites my hand
Which tells the wonder of thine earlier time;
And fain its numbers would I now command
To paint the beauties of that dawning fair
When Harold, gazing from its lofty stand
Upon the western heights of Beaurepaire,
Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt by winding Wear.

II

Fair on the half-seen streams the sunbeams danced,
Betraying it beneath the woodland bank,
And fair between the Gothic turrets glanced
Broad lights, and shadows fell on front and flank,
Where tower and buttress rose in martial rank,
And girdled in the massive donjon keep,
And from their circuit pealed o'er bush and bank
The matin bell with summons long and deep,
And echo answered still with long-resounding sweep.

III

The morning mists rose from the ground,
Each merry bird awakened round
As if in revelry;
Afar the bugle's clanging sound
Calls to the chase the lagging hound;
The gale breathed soft and free,

And seemed to linger on its way
To catch fresh odours from the spray,
And waved it in its wanton play
So light and gamesomely.
The scenes which morning beams reveal,
Its sounds to hear, its gales to feel
In all their fragrance round him steal,
It melted Harold's heart of steel,
And, hardly wotting why,
He doffed his helmet's gloomy pride
And hung it on a tree beside,
Laid mace and falchion by,
And on the greensward sate him down
And from his dark habitual frown
Relaxed his rugged brow —
Whoever hath the doubtful task
From that stern Dane a boon to ask
Were wise to ask it now.

IV

His place beside young Gunnar took
And marked his master's softening look,
And in his eye's dark mirror spied
The gloom of stormy thoughts subside,
And cautious watched the fittest tide
To speak a warning word.

So when the torrent's billows shrink,
The timid pilgrim on the brink
Waits long to see them wave and sink
  Ere he dare brave the ford,
And often after doubtful pause
His step advances or withdraws;
Fearful to move the slumbering ire
Of his stern lord, thus stood the squire
  Till Harold raised his eye,
That glanced as when athwart the shroud
Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
  The bursting sunbeams fly.

V

'Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
Offspring of prophetess and bard!
Take harp and greet this lovely prime
With some high strain of Runic rhyme,
Strong, deep, and powerful! Peal it round
Like that loud bell's sonorous sound,
Yet wild by fits, as when the lay
Of bird and bugle hail the day.
Such was my grandsire Eric's sport
When dawn gleamed on his martial court.
Heymar the Scald with harp's high sound
Summoned the chiefs who slept around;
Couched on the spoils of wolf and bear,

They roused like lions from their lair,
Then rushed in emulation forth
To enhance the glories of the north.
Proud Eric, mightiest of thy race,
Where is thy shadowy resting-place?
In wild Valhalla hast thou quaffed
From foeman's skull metheglin draught,
Or wanderest where thy cairn was piled
To frown o'er oceans wide and wild?
Or have the milder Christians given
Thy refuge in their peaceful heaven?
Where'er thou art, to thee are known
Our toils endured, our trophies won,
Our wars, our wanderings, and our woes.'
He ceased, and Gunnar's song arose.

VI

SONG

'Hawk and osprey screamed for joy
O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
Crimson foam the beach o'erspread,
The heath was dyed with darker red,
When o'er Eric, Inguar's son,
Dane and Northman piled the stone,
Singing wild the war-song stern,
"Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!"

'Where eddying currents foam and boil
By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's isle,
The seaman sees a martial form
Half-mingled with the mist and storm.
In anxious awe he bears away
To moor his bark in Stromna's bay,
And murmurs from the bounding stern,
"Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!"

'What cares disturb the mighty dead?
Each honoured rite was duly paid;
No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
Thy sword, thy shield, were near thee placed;
Thy flinty couch no tear profaned:
Without, with hostile blood 'twas stained;
Within, 'twas lined with moss and fern,—
Then rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!

'He may not rest: from realms afar
Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody hand
On Carmel's cliffs and Jordan's strand,
When Odin's warlike son could daunt
The turbaned race of Termagaunt.'

VII

'Peace,' said the knight, 'the noble Scald
Our warlike fathers' deeds recalled,

But never strove to soothe the son
With tales of what himself had done.
At Odin's board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne'er stooped to flattery,
But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to say.'
With doubtful smile young Gunnar eyed
His master's looks and nought replied —
But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.
'Is it to me, thou timid youth,
Thou fear'st to speak unwelcome truth!
My soul no more thy censure grieves
Than frosts rob laurels of their leaves.
Say on — and yet — beware the rude
And wild distemper of my blood;
Loath were I that mine ire should wrong
The youth that bore my shield so long,
And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong in will.'
'O!' quoth the page, 'even there depends
My counsel — there my warning tends —
Oft seems as of my master's breast
Some demon were the sudden guest;
Then at the first misconstrued word
His hand is on the mace and sword,
From her firm seat his wisdom driven,

His life to countless dangers given.
O, would that Gunnar could suffice
To be the fiend's last sacrifice,
So that, when glutted with my gore,
He fled and tempted thee no more!'

VIII

Then waved his hand and shook his head
The impatient Dane while thus he said:
'Profane not, youth — it is not thine
To judge the spirit of our line —
The bold Berserkar's rage divine,
Through whose inspiring deeds are wrought
Past human strength and human thought.
When full upon his gloomy soul
The champion feels the influence roll,
He swims the lake, he leaps the wall —
Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs the fall —
Unshielded, mail-less, on he goes
Singly against a host of foes;
Their spears he holds like withered reeds,
Their mail like maiden's silken weeds;
One 'gainst a hundred will he strive,
Take countless wounds and yet survive.
Then rush the eagles to his cry
Of slaughter and of victory, —
And blood he quaffs like Odin's bowl,

Deep drinks his sword, — deep drinks his soul;
And all that meet him in his ire
He gives to ruin, rout, and fire;
Then, like gorged lion, seeks some den
And couches till he's man agen.
Thou know'st the signs of look and limb
When 'gins that rage to overbrim —
Thou know'st when I am moved, and why;
And when thou see'st me roll mine eye,
Set my teeth thus, and stamp my foot,
Regard thy safety and be mute;
But else speak boldly out whate'er
Is fitting that a knight should hear.
I love thee, youth. Thy lay has power
Upon my dark and sullen hour; —
So Christian monks are wont to say
Demons of old were charmed away;
Then fear not I will rashly deem
Ill of thy speech, whate'er the theme.'

IX

As down some strait in doubt and dread
The watchful pilot drops the lead,
And, cautious in the midst to steer,
The shoaling channel sounds with fear;
So, lest on dangerous ground he swerved,
The page his master's brow observed,

Pausing at intervals to fling
His hand on the melodious string,
And to his moody breast apply
The soothing charm of harmony,
While hinted half, and half exprest,
This warning song conveyed the rest.

SONG

'Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
And ill when on the breakers driven, —
Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks in air,
And the scared mermaid tears her hair;
But worse when on her helm the hand
Of some false traitor holds command.

'Ill fares the fainting palmer, placed
'Mid Hebron's rocks or Rana's waste, —
Ill when the scorching sun is high,
And the expected font is dry, —
Worse when his guide o'er sand and heath,
The barbarous Copt, has planned his death.

'Ill fares the knight with buckler cleft,
And ill when of his helm bereft, —
Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
Or from his grasp his falchion wrung;
But worse, of instant ruin token,
When he lists rede by woman spoken.'

X

'How now, fond boy? — Canst thou think ill,'
Said Harold, 'of fair Metelill?'

'She may be fair,' the page replied
As through the strings he ranged, —
'She may be fair; but yet,' he cried,
And then the strain he changed, —

SONG

'She may be fair,' he sang, 'but yet
Far fairer have I seen
Than she, for all her locks of jet
And eyes so dark and sheen.
Were I a Danish knight in arms,
As one day I may be,
My heart should own no foreign charms —
A Danish maid for me!

'I love my father's northern land,
Where the dark pine-trees grow,
And the bold Baltic's echoing strand
Looks o'er each grassy oe.
I love to mark the lingering sun,
From Denmark loath to go,

And leaving on the billows bright,
To cheer the short-lived summer night,
A path of ruddy glow.

'But most the northern maid I love,
With breast like Denmark's snow
And form as fair as Denmark's pine,
Who loves with purple heath to twine
Her locks of sunny glow;
And sweetly blend that shade of gold
With the cheek's rosy hue,
And Faith might for her mirror hold
That eye of matchless blue.

''T is hers the manly sports to love
That southern maidens fear,
To bend the bow by stream and grove,
And lift the hunter's spear.
She can her chosen champion's flight
With eye undazzled see,
Clasp him victorious from the strife,
Or on his corpse yield up her life, —
A Danish maid for me!'

XI

Then smiled the Dane: 'Thou canst so well,
The virtues of our maidens tell,

Half could I wish my choice had been
Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
And lofty soul; — yet what of ill
Hast thou to charge on Metelill?'
'Nothing on her,' young Gunnar said,
'But her base sire's ignoble trade.
Her mother too — the general fame
Hath given to Jutta evil name,
And in her grey eye is a flame
Art cannot hide nor fear can tame.
That sordid woodman's peasant cot
Twice have thine honoured footsteps sought,
And twice returned with such ill rede
As sent thee on some desperate deed.'

XII

'Thou errest; Jutta wisely said,
He that comes suitor to a maid,
Ere linked in marriage, should provide
Lands and a dwelling for his bride —
My father's by the Tyne and Wear
I have reclaimed.' — 'O, all too dear
And all too dangerous the prize,
E'en were it won,' young Gunnar cries; —
'And then this Jutta's fresh device,
That thou shouldst seek, a heathen Dane,
From Durham's priests a boon to gain

When thou hast left their vassals slain
In their own halls!' — Flashed Harold's eye,
Thundered his voice — 'False page, you lie!'
The castle, hall and tower, is mine,
Built by old Witikind on Tyne.
The wild-cat will defend his den,
Fights for her nest the timid wren;
And think'st thou I 'll forego my right
For dread of monk or monkish knight?
Up and away, that deepening bell
Doth of the bishop's conclave tell.
Thither will I in manner due,
As Jutta bade, my claim to sue;
And if to right me they are loath,
Then woe to church and chapter both!'
Now shift the scene and let the curtain fall,
And our next entry be Saint Cuthbert's hall.

CANTO FOURTH

I

FULL many a bard hath sung the solemn gloom
Of the long Gothic aisle and stone-ribbed roof,
O'er-canopying shrine and gorgeous tomb,
Carved screen, and altar glimmering far aloof
And blending with the shade — a matchless proof
Of high devotion, which hath now waxed cold;
Yet legends say that Luxury's brute hoof
Intruded oft within such sacred fold,
Like step of Bel's false priest tracked in his fane of old.

Well pleased am I, howe'er, that when the rout
Of our neighbours whilome deigned to come,
Uncalled and eke unwelcome, to sweep out
And cleanse our chancel from the rags of Rome,
They spoke not on our ancient fane the doom
To which their bigot zeal gave o'er their own,
But spared the martyred saint and storied tomb,
Though papal miracles had graced the stone,
And though the aisles still loved the organ's swelling tone.

And deem not, though 't is now my part to paint
A prelate swayed by love of power and gold,

That all who wore the mitre of our Saint
Like to ambitious Aldingar I hold;
Since both in modern times and days of old
It sate on those whose virtues might atone
Their predecessors' frailties trebly told:
Matthew and Morton we as such may own —
And such — if fame speak truth — the honoured
Barrington.

II

But now to earlier and to ruder times,
As subject meet, I tune my rugged rhymes,
Telling how fairly the chapter was met,
And rood and books in seemly order set;
Huge brass-clasped volumes which the hand
Of studious priest but rarely scanned,
Now on fair carved desk displayed,
'T was theirs the solemn scene to aid.
O'erhead with many a scutcheon graced
And quaint devices interlaced,
A labyrinth of crossing rows,
The roof in lessening arches shows;
Beneath its shade placed proud and high
With footstool and with canopy,
Sate Aldingar — and prelate ne'er
More haughty graced Saint Cuthbert's chair;
Canons and deacons were placed below,
In due degree and lengthened row.

Unmoved and silent each sat there,
Like image in his oaken chair;
Nor head nor hand nor foot they stirred,
Nor lock of hair nor tress of beard;
And of their eyes severe alone
The twinkle showed they were not stone.

III

The prelate was to speech addressed,
Each head sunk reverent on each breast;
But ere his voice was heard — without
Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
Offspring of wonder mixed with fear,
Such as in crowded streets we hear
Hailing the flames that, bursting out,
Attract yet scare the rabble rout.
Ere it had ceased a giant hand
Shook oaken door and iron band
Till oak and iron both gave way,
Clashed the long bolts, the hinges bray,
And, ere upon angel or saint they can call,
Stands Harold the Dauntless in midst of the hall.

IV

'Now save ye, my masters, both rocket and rood,
From bishop with mitre to deacon with hood!
For here stands Count Harold, old Witikind's son,

Come to sue for the lands which his ancestors won.'
The prelate looked round him with sore troubled eye,
Unwilling to grant, yet afraid to deny;
While each canon and deacon who heard the Dane speak,
To be safely at home would have fasted a week: —
Then Aldingar roused him and answered again,
'Thou suest for a boon which thou canst not obtain;
The Church hath no fiefs for an unchristened Dane.
Thy father was wise, and his treasure hath given
That the priests of a chantry might hymn him to heaven;
And the fiefs which whilome he possessed as his due
Have lapsed to the Church, and been granted anew
To Anthony Conyers and Alberic Vere,
For the service Saint Cuthbert's blest banner to bear
Where the bands of the North come to foray the Wear;
Then disturb not our conclave with wrangling or blame,
But in peace and in patience pass hence as ye came.'

V

Loud laughed the stern Pagan, 'They're free from the care
Of fief and of service, both Conyers and Vere, —
Six feet of your chancel is all they will need,
A buckler of stone and a corselet of lead.
Ho, Gunnar! — the tokens!' — and, severed anew,
A head and a hand on the altar he threw.

Then shuddered with terror both canon and monk,
They knew the glazed eye and the countenance shrunk,
And of Anthony Conyers the half-grizzled hair,
And the scar on the hand of Sir Alberic Vere.
There was not a churchman or priest that was there
But grew pale at the sight and betook him to prayer

VI

Count Harold laughed at their looks of fear:
'Was this the hand should your banner bear?
Was that the head should wear the casque
In battle at the Church's task?
Was it to such you gave the place
Of Harold with the heavy mace?
Find me between the Wear and Tyne
A knight will wield this club of mine, —
Give him my fiefs, and I will say
There's wit beneath the cowl of grey.'
He raised it, rough with many a stain
Caught from crushed skull and spouting brain;
He wheeled it that it shrilly sung
And the aisles echoed as it swung,
Then dashed it down with sheer descent
And split King Osric's monument.
'How like ye this music? How trow ye the hand
That can wield such a mace may be reft of its land?
No answer? — I spare ye a space to agree,

And Saint Cuthbert inspire you, a saint if he be.
Ten strides through your chancel, ten strokes on your bell,
And again I am with you — grave fathers, farewell.'

VII

He turned from their presence, he clashed the oak door,
And the clang of his stride died away on the floor;
And his head from his bosom the prelate uprears
With a ghost-seer's look when the ghost disappears:
'Ye priests of Saint Cuthbert, now give me your rede,
For never of counsel had bishop more need!
Were the arch-fiend incarnate in flesh and in bone,
The language, the look, and the laugh were his own.
In the bounds of Saint Cuthbert there is not a knight
Dare confront in our quarrel yon goblin in fight;
Then rede me aright to his claim to reply,
'T is unlawful to grant, and 't is death to deny.'

VIII

On venison and malmsie that morning had fed
The Cellarer Vinsauf — 't was thus that he said:
'Delay till to-morrow the Chapter's reply;
Let the feast be spread fair and the wine be poured high:
If he 's mortal he drinks, — if he drinks, he is ours —

His bracelets of iron, — his bed in our towers.'
This man had a laughing eye,
Trust not, friends, when such you spy;
A beaker's depth he well could drain,
Revel, sport, and jest amain —
The haunch of the deer and the grape's bright dye
Never bard loved them better than I;
But sooner than Vinsauf filled me my wine,
Passed me his jest, and laughed at mine,
Though the buck were of Bearpark, of Bordeaux the vine,
With the dullest hermit I 'd rather dine
On an oaten cake and a draught of the Tyne.

IX

Walwayn the leech spoke next — he knew
Each plant that loves the sun and dew,
But special those whose juice can gain
Dominion o'er the blood and brain;
The peasant who saw him by pale moonbeam
Gathering such herbs by bank and stream
Deemed his thin form and soundless tread
Were those of wanderer from the dead.
'Vinsauf, thy wine,' he said, 'hath power,
Our gyves are heavy, strong our tower;
Yet three drops from this flask of mine,
More strong than dungeons, gyves, or wine,

Shall give him prison under ground
More dark, more narrow, more profound.
Short rede, good rede, let Harold have —
A dog's death and a heathen's grave.'
I have lain on a sick man's bed,
Watching for hours for the leech's tread,
As if I deemed that his presence alone
Were of power to bid my pain begone;
I have listed his words of comfort given,
As if to oracles from heaven;
I have counted his steps from my chamber door,
And blessed them when they were heard no more; —
But sooner than Walwayn my sick couch should
nigh,
My choice were by leech-craft unaided to die!

X

'Such service done in fervent zeal
The Church may pardon and conceal,'
The doubtful prelate said, 'but ne'er
The counsel ere the act should hear.
Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
The stamp of wisdom is on thy brow;
Thy days, thy nights, in cloister pent,
Are still to mystic learning lent; —
Anselm of Jarrow, in thee is my hope,
Thou well mayst give counsel to prelate or pope.'

XI

Answered the prior, — ''T is wisdom's use
Still to delay what we dare not refuse;
Ere granting the boon he comes hither to ask,
Shape for the giant gigantic task;
Let us see how a step so sounding can tread
In paths of darkness, danger, and dread;
He may not, he will not, impugn our decree
That calls but for proof of his chivalry;
And were Guy to return or Sir Bevis the Strong,
Our wilds have adventure might cumber them long —
The Castle of Seven Shields' — 'Kind Anselm, no more!
The step of the Pagan approaches the door.'
The churchmen were hushed. — In his mantle of skin
With his mace on his shoulder Count Harold strode in.
There was foam on his lips, there was fire in his eye,
For, chafed by attendance, his fury was nigh.
'Ho! Bishop,' he said, 'dost thou grant me my claim?
Or must I assert it by falchion and flame?'

XII

'On thy suit, gallant Harold,' the bishop replied,
In accents which trembled, 'we may not decide
Until proof of your strength and your valour we
saw —
'T is not that we doubt them, but such is the law.'

'And would you, Sir Prelate, have Harold make sport
For the cowls and the shavelings that herd in thy court?
Say what shall he do? — From the shrine shall he tear
The lead bier of thy patron and heave it in air,
And through the long chancel make Cuthbert take wing
With the speed of a bullet dismissed from the sling?'
'Nay, spare such probation,' the cellarer said,
'From the mouth of our minstrels thy task shall be read.
While the wine sparkles high in the goblet of gold
And the revel is loudest, thy task shall be told;
And thyself, gallant Harold, shall, hearing it, tell
That the bishop, his cowls, and his shavelings, meant well.'

XIII

Loud revelled the guests and the goblets loud rang,
But louder the minstrel, Hugh Meneville, sang;
And Harold, the hurry and pride of whose soul,
E'en when verging to fury, owned music's control,
Still bent on the harper his broad sable eye,
And often untasted the goblet passed by;
Than wine or than wassail to him was more dear
The minstrel's high tale of enchantment to hear;
And the bishop that day might of Vinsauf complain
That his art had but wasted his wine-casks in vain.

XIV

THE CASTLE OF THE SEVEN SHIELDS

A BALLAD

The Druid Urien had daughters seven,
Their skill could call the moon from heaven;
So fair their forms and so high their fame
That seven proud kings for their suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from Powis and Wales,
Unshorn was their hair and unpruned were their nails;
From Strath-Clyde was Ewain, and Ewain was lame,
And the red-bearded Donald from Galloway came.

Lot, King of Lodon, was hunchbacked from youth;
Dunmail of Cumbria had never a tooth;
But Adolf of Bambrough, Northumberland's heir,
Was gay and was gallant, was young and was fair.

There was strife 'mongst the sisters, for each one would have
For husband King Adolf, the gallant and brave;
And envy bred hate, and hate urged them to blows,
When the firm earth was cleft and the Arch-fiend arose!

He swore to the maidens their wish to fulfil —
They swore to the foe they would work by his will.

A spindle and distaff to each hath he given,
'Now hearken my spell,' said the Outcast of heaven.

'Ye shall ply these spindles at midnight hour,
And for every spindle shall rise a tower,
Where the right shall be feeble, the wrong shall have
power,
And there shall ye dwell with your paramour.'

Beneath the pale moonlight they sate on the wold,
And the rhymes which they chanted must never be
told;
And as the black wool from the distaff they sped,
With blood from their bosom they moistened the thread.

As light danced the spindles beneath the cold gleam,
The castle arose like the birth of a dream —
The seven towers ascended like mist from the ground,
Seven portals defend them, seven ditches surround.

Within that dread castle seven monarchs were wed,
But six of the seven ere the morning lay dead;
With their eyes all on fire and their daggers all red,
Seven damsels surround the Northumbrian's bed.

'Six kingly bridegrooms to death we have done,
Six gallant kingdoms King Adolf hath won,

Six lovely brides all his pleasure to do,
Or the bed of the seventh shall be husbandless too.'

Well chanced it that Adolf the night when he wed
Had confessed and had sained him ere boune to his bed;
He sprung from the couch and his broadsword he drew,
And there the seven daughters of Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted and sealed,
And hung o'er each arch-stone a crown and a shield;
To the cells of Saint Dunstan then wended his way,
And died in his cloister an anchorite grey.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that castle lies stowed,
The foul fiends brood o'er them like raven and toad.
Whoever shall guesten these chambers within,
From curfew till matins, that treasure shall win.

But manhood grows faint as the world waxes old!
There lives not in Britain a champion so bold,
So dauntless of heart and so prudent of brain,
As to dare the adventure that treasure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall wave with the rye,
Before the rude Scots shall Northumberland fly,
And the flint cliffs of Bambro' shall melt in the sun,
Before that adventure be perilled and won.

XV

'And is this my probation?' wild Harold he said,
'Within a lone castle to press a lone bed? —
Good even, my lord bishop, — Saint Cuthbert to
borrow,
The Castle of Seven Shields receives me to-morrow.'

CANTO FIFTH

I

DENMARK'S sage courtier to her princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ousel or a whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a partial truth;
For Fantasy embroiders Nature's veil.
The tints of ruddy eve or dawning pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud or silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the rich detail
Which Fantasy with pencil wild portrays,
Blending what seems and is in the wrapt muser's gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of earth and stone
Less to the Sorceress's empire given;
For not with unsubstantial hues alone,
Caught from the varying surge of vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam or from flashing levin,
She limns her pictures: on the earth, as air,
Arise her castles and her car is driven;
And never gazed the eye on scene so fair,
But of its boasted charms gave Fancy half the share.

II

Up a wild pass went Harold, bent to prove,
Hugh Meneville, the adventure of thy lay;

Gunnar pursued his steps in faith and love,
Ever companion of his master's way.
Midward their path, a rock of granite grey
From the adjoining cliff had made descent, —
A barren mass — yet with her drooping spray
Had a young birch-tree crowned its battlement,
Twisting her fibrous roots through cranny, flaw, and rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's thought engage
Till Fancy brought the tear-drop to his eye,
And at his master asked the timid page,
'What is the emblem that a bard should spy
In that rude rock and its green canopy?'
And Harold said, 'Like to the helmet brave
Of warrior slain in fight it seems to lie,
And these same drooping boughs do o'er it wave
Not all unlike the plume his lady's favour gave.'

'Ah, no!' replied the page; 'the ill-starred love
Of some poor maid is in the emblem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's interwove,
And rooted on a heart to love unknown:
And as the gentle dews of heaven alone
Nourish those drooping boughs, and as the scathe
Of the red lightning rends both tree and stone,
So fares it with her unrequited faith, —
Her sole relief is tears — her only refuge death.'

III

'Thou art a fond fantastic boy,'
Harold replied, 'to females coy,
Yet prating still of love;
Even so amid the clash of war
I know thou lov'st to keep afar,
Though destined by thy evil star
With one like me to rove,
Whose business and whose joys are found
Upon the bloody battle-ground.
Yet, foolish trembler as thou art,
Thou hast a nook of my rude heart,
And thou and I will never part; —
Harold would wrap the world in flame
Ere injury on Gunnar came.'

IV

The grateful page made no reply,
But turned to heaven his gentle eye,
And clasped his hands, as one who said,
'My toils — my wanderings are o'erpaid!'
Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
Compelled himself to speech again;
And, as they flowed along,
His words took cadence soft and slow,
And liquid, like dissolving snow,
They melted into song.

V

'What though through fields of carnage wide
I may not follow Harold's stride,
Yet who with faithful Gunnar's pride
Lord Harold's feats can see?
And dearer than the couch of pride
He loves the bed of grey wolf's hide,
When slumbering by Lord Harold's side
In forest, field, or lea.'

VI

'Break off!' said Harold, in a tone
Where hurry and surprise were shown,
With some slight touch of fear,
'Break off, we are not here alone;
A palmer form comes slowly on!
By cowl and staff and mantle known,
My monitor is near.
Now mark him, Gunnar, heedfully;
He pauses by the blighted tree —
Dost see him, youth? — Thou couldst not see
When in the vale of Galilee
I first beheld his form,
Nor when we met that other while
In Cephalonia's rocky isle
Before the fearful storm, —

Dost see him now?' — The page, distraught
With terror, answered, 'I see nought,
And there is nought to see,
Save that the oak's scathed boughs fling down
Upon the path a shadow brown
That, like a pilgrim's dusky gown,
Waves with the waving tree.'

VII

Count Harold gazed upon the oak
As if his eyestrings would have broke,
And then resolvedly said,
'Be what it will yon phantom grey —
Nor heaven nor hell shall ever say
That for their shadows from his way
Count Harold turned dismayed:
I'll speak him, though his accents fill
My heart with that unwonted thrill
Which vulgar minds call fear.
I will subdue it!' Forth he strode,
Paused where the blighted oak-tree showed
Its sable shadow on the road,
And, folding on his bosom broad
His arms, said, 'Speak — I hear.'

VIII

The Deep Voice said, 'O wild of will,
Furious thy purpose to fulfil —

Heart-seared and unrepentant still,
How long, O Harold, shall thy tread
Disturb the slumbers of the dead?
Each step in thy wild way thou makest,
The ashes of the dead thou wakest;
And shout in triumph o'er thy path
The fiends of bloodshed and of wrath.
In this thine hour, yet turn and hear!
For life is brief and judgment near.'

IX

Then ceased the Voice. — The Dane replied
In tones where awe and inborn pride
For mastery strove, 'In vain ye chide
The wolf for ravaging the flock,
Or with its hardness taunt the rock, —
I am as they — my Danish strain
Sends streams of fire through every vein.
Amid thy realms of goule and ghost
Say, is the fame of Eric lost,
Or Witikind's the Waster, known
Where fame or spoil was to be won;
Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore
They left not black with flame? —
He was my sire, — and, sprung of him,
That rover merciless and grim,
Can I be soft and tame?

Part hence and with my crimes no more upbraid
me,
I am that Waster's son, and am but what he made
me.'

X

The Phantom groaned; — the mountain shook around,
The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,
The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,
As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.
'All thou hast said is truth — yet on the head
Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid
That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace
From grave to cradle ran the evil race: —
Relentless in his avarice and ire,
Churches and towns he gave to sword and fire;
Shed blood like water, wasted every land,
Like the destroying angel's burning brand;
Fulfiled whate'er of ill might be invented,
Yes, — all these things he did — he did, but he RE-
PENTED!
Perchance it is part of his punishment still
That his offspring pursues his example of ill.
But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next shake
thee,
Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee;
If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,
The gate of repentance shall ope for thee NEVER!'

XI

'He is gone,' said Lord Harold and gazed as he spoke;
'There is nought on the path but the shade of the oak.
He is gone whose strange presence my feelings oppressed,
Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.
My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,
And cold dews drop from my brow and my head. —
Ho! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave;
He said that three drops would recall from the grave.
For the first time Count Harold owns leechcraft has power,
Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower!'
The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had filled
With the juice of wild roots that his heart had distilled —
So baneful their influence on all that had breath,
One drop had been frenzy and two had been death.
Harold took it, but drank not; for jubilee shrill
And music and clamour were heard on the hill,
And down the steep pathway o'er stock and o'er stone
The train of a bridal came blithesomely on;
There was song, there was pipe, there was timbrel and still
The burden was, 'Joy to the fair Metelill!'

XII

Harold might see from his high stance,
Himself unseen, that train advance,
With mirth and melody; —
On horse and foot a mingled throng,
Measuring their steps to bridal song
And bridal minstrelsy;
And ever when the blithesome rout
Lent to the song their choral shout,
Redoubling echoes rolled about,
While echoing cave and cliff sent out
The answering symphony
Of all those mimic notes which dwell
In hollow rock and sounding dell.

XIII

Joy shook his torch above the band,
By many a various passion fanned; —
As elemental sparks can feed
On essence pure and coarsest weed,
Gentle or stormy or refined,
Joy takes the colours of the mind.
Lightsome and pure but unrepressed,
He fired the bridegroom's gallant breast;
More feebly strove with maiden fear,
Yet still joy glimmered through the tear

On the bride's blushing cheek that shows
Like dew-drops on the budding rose;
While Wulfstane's gloomy smile declared
The glee that selfish avarice shared,
And pleased revenge and malice high
Joy's semblance took in Jutta's eye.
On dangerous adventure sped,
The witch deemed Harold with the dead,
For thus that morn her demon said: —
'If, ere the set of sun, be tied
The knot 'twixt bridegroom and his bride,
The Dane shall have no power of ill
O'er William and o'er Metelill.'
And the pleased witch made answer, 'Then
Must Harold have passed from the paths of men!
Evil repose may his spirit have, —
May hemlock and mandrake find root in his grave, —
May his death-sleep be dogged by dreams of dismay,
And his waking be worse at the answering day!'

XIV

Such was their various mood of glee
Blent in one shout of ecstasy.
But still when Joy is brimming highest,
Of sorrow and misfortune nighest,
Of Terror with her ague cheek,
And lurking Danger, sages speak: —

These haunt each path, but chief they lay
Their snares beside the primrose way. —
Thus found that bridal band their path
Beset by Harold in his wrath.
Trembling beneath his maddening mood,
High on a rock the giant stood;
His shout was like the doom of death
Spoke o'er their heads that passed beneath.
His destined victims might not spy
The reddening terrors of his eye,
The frown of rage that writhed his face,
The lip that foamed like boar's in chase;
But all could see — and, seeing, all
Bore back to shun the threatened fall —
The fragment which their giant foe
Rent from the cliff and heaved to throw.

XV

Backward they bore — yet are there two
For battle who prepare:
No pause of dread Lord William knew
Ere his good blade was bare;
And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
But ere the silken cord he drew,
As hurled from Hecla's thunder flew
That ruin through the air!

Full on the outlaw's front it came,
And all that late had human name,
And human face, and human frame,
That lived and moved and had free will
To choose the path of good or ill,
  Is to its reckoning gone;
And nought of Wulfstane rests behind
  Save that beneath that stone,
Half-buried in the dinted clay,
A red and shapeless mass there lay
  Of mingled flesh and bone!

XVI

As from the bosom of the sky
  The eagle darts amain,
Three bounds from yonder summit high
  Placed Harold on the plain.
As the scared wild-fowl scream and fly,
  So fled the bridal train;
As 'gainst the eagle's peerless might
The noble falcon dares the fight,
  But dares the fight in vain,
So fought the bridegroom; from his hand
The Dane's rude mace has struck his brand,
Its glittering fragments strew the sand,
  Its lord lies on the plain.
Now, Heaven! take noble William's part,

And melt that yet unmelted heart,
Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom 's slain!

XVII

Count Harold's frenzied rage is high,
There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are trenched,
His teeth are set, his hand is clenched,
The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite!
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar sprung,
Around his master's knees he clung,
And cried, 'In mercy spare!
O, think upon the words of fear
Spoke by that visionary Seer,
The crisis he foretold is here, —
Grant mercy, — or despair!'
This word suspended Harold's mood,
Yet still with arm upraised he stood,
And visage like the headsman's rude
That pauses for the sign.
'O mark thee with the blessed rood,'
The page implored: 'Speak word of good,
Resist the fiend or be subdued!'
He signed the cross divine —

Instant his eye hath human light,
Less red, less keen, less fiercely bright;
His brow relaxed the obdurate frown,
The fatal mace sinks gently down,
He turns and strides away;
Yet oft, like revellers who leave
Unfinished feast, looks back to grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve
He granted to his prey.
Yet still of forbearance one sign hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made one step towards heaven.

XVIII

But though his dreaded footsteps part,
Death is behind and shakes his dart;
Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dying! —
Bring odours — essences in haste —
And lo! a flasket richly chased, —
But Jutta the elixir proves
Ere pouring it for those she loves —
Then Walwayn's potion was not wasted,
For when three drops the hag had tasted
So dismal was her yell,
Each bird of evil omen woke,
The raven gave his fatal croak,

And shrieked the night-crow from the oak,
The screech-owl from the thicket broke,
And fluttered down the dell!
So fearful was the sound and stern,
The slumbers of the full-gorged erne
Were startled, and from furze and fern
Of forest and of fell
The fox and famished wolf replied —
For wolves then prowled the Cheviot side —
From mountain head to mountain head
The unhallowed sounds around were sped;
But when their latest echo fled
The sorceress on the ground lay dead.

XIX

Such was the scene of blood and woes
With which the bridal morn arose
Of William and of Metelill;
But oft, when dawning 'gins to spread,
The summer morn peeps dim and red
Above the eastern hill,
Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
The king of splendour walks abroad;
So, when this cloud had passed away,
Bright was the noontide of their day
And all serene its setting ray.

CANTO SIXTH

I

Well do I hope that this my minstrel tale
Will tempt no traveller from southern fields,
Whether in tilbury, barouche, or mail,
To view the Castle of these Seven Proud Shields.
Small confirmation its condition yields
To Meneville's high lay, — no towers are seen
On the wild heath but those that Fancy builds,
And, save a fosse that tracks the moor with green,
Is nought remains to tell of what may there have been.

And yet grave authors, with the no small waste
Of their grave time, have dignified the spot
By theories, to prove the fortress placed
By Roman bands to curb the invading Scot.
Hutchinson, Horseley, Camden, I might quote,
But rather choose the theory less civil
Of boors, who, origin of things forgot,
Refer still to the origin of evil,
And for their master-mason choose that master-fiend the Devil.

II

Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-built towers
That stout Count Harold bent his wondering gaze

When evening dew was on the heather flowers,
And the last sunbeams made the mountain blaze
And tinged the battlements of other days
With the bright level light ere sinking down.
Illumined thus, the dauntless Dane surveys
The Seven Proud Shields that o'er the portal frown,
And on their blazons traced high marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his armour-coat,
And Rhys of Powis-land a couchant stag;
Strath-Clwyd's strange emblem was a stranded boat,
Donald of Galloway's a trotting nag;
A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile Lodon's brag;
A dudgeon-dagger was by Dunmail worn;
Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-beat crag
Surmounted by a cross — such signs were borne
Upon these antique shields, all wasted now and worn.

III

These scanned, Count Harold sought the castle-door,
Whose ponderous bolts were rusted to decay;
Yet till that hour adventurous knight forbore
The unobstructed passage to essay.
More strong than armèd warders in array,
And obstacle more sure than bolt or bar,
Sate in the portal Terror and Dismay,
While Superstition, who forbade to war

With foes of other mould than mortal clay,
Cast spells across the gate and barred the onward way.

Vain now those spells; for soon with heavy clank
The feebly-fastened gate was inward pushed,
And, as it oped, through that emblazoned rank
Of antique shields the wind of evening rushed
With sound most like a groan and then was hushed.
Is none who on such spot such sounds could hear
But to his heart the blood had faster rushed;
Yet to bold Harold's breast that throb was dear —
It spoke of danger nigh, but had no touch of fear.

IV

Yet Harold and his page no signs have traced
Within the castle that of danger showed;
For still the halls and courts were wild and waste,
As through their precincts the adventurers trode.
The seven huge towers rose stately, tall, and broad,
Each tower presenting to their scrutiny
A hall in which a king might make abode,
And fast beside, garnished both proud and high,
Was placed a bower for rest in which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had been,
Decked stood the table in each gorgeous hall;
And yet it was two hundred years, I ween,

Since date of that unhallowed festival.
Flagons and ewers and standing cups were all
Of tarnished gold or silver nothing clear,
With throne begilt and canopy of pall,
And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments sear—
Frail as the spider's mesh did that rich woof appear.

V

In every bower, as round a hearse, was hung
A dusky crimson curtain o'er the bed,
And on each couch in ghastly wise were flung
The wasted relics of a monarch dead;
Barbaric ornaments around were spread,
Vests twined with gold and chains of precious stone,
And golden circlets, meet for monarch's head;
While grinned, as if in scorn amongst them thrown,
The wearer's fleshless skull, alike with dust bestrewn.

For these were they who, drunken with delight,
On pleasure's opiate pillow laid their head,
For whom the bride's shy footstep, slow and light,
Was changed ere morning to the murderer's tread.
For human bliss and woe in the frail thread
Of human life are all so closely twined
That till the shears of Fate the texture shred
The close succession cannot be disjoined,
Nor dare we from one hour judge that which comes behind.

VI

But where the work of vengeance had been done,
In that seventh chamber, was a sterner sight;
There of the witch-brides lay each skeleton,
Still in the posture as to death when dight.
For this lay prone, by one blow slain outright;
And that, as one who struggled long in dying;
One bony hand held knife, as if to smite;
One bent on fleshless knees, as mercy crying;
One lay across the door, as killed in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this charnel-house to see, —
For his chafed thought returned to Metelill; —
And 'Well,' he said, 'hath woman's perfidy,
Empty as air, as water volatile,
Been here avenged. — The origin of ill
Through woman rose, the Christian doctrine saith;
Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy minstrel skill
Can show example where a woman's breath
Hath made a true-love vow, and tempted kept her faith.'

VII

The minstrel-boy half smiled, half sighed,
And his half-filling eyes he dried,
And said, 'The theme I should but wrong,
Unless it were my dying song —

Our Scalds have said, in dying hour
The Northern harp has treble power —
Else could I tell of woman's faith,
Defying danger, scorn, and death.
Firm was that faith — as diamond stone
Pure and unflawed — her love unknown
And unrequited; — firm and pure,
Her stainless faith could all endure;
From clime to clime, from place to place,
Through want and danger and disgrace,
A wanderer's wayward steps could trace.
All this she did, and guerdon none
Required save that her burial-stone
Should make at length the secret known,
"Thus hath a faithful woman done."
Not in each breast such truth is laid,
But Eivir was a Danish maid.'

VIII

'Thou art a wild enthusiast,' said
Count Harold, 'for thy Danish maid;
And yet, young Gunnar, I will own
Hers were a faith to rest upon.
But Eivir sleeps beneath her stone
And all resembling her are gone.
What maid e'er showed such constancy
In plighted faith, like thine to me?

But couch thee, boy; the darksome shade
Falls thickly round, nor be dismayed
  Because the dead are by.
They were as we; our little day
O'erspent, and we shall be as they.
Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou laid,
Thy couch upon my mantle made,
That thou mayst think, should fear invade,
  Thy master slumbers nigh.'
Thus couched they in that dread abode,
Until the beams of dawning glowed.

IX

An altered man Lord Harold rose,
When he beheld that dawn unclose —
  There 's trouble in his eyes,
And traces on his brow and cheek
Of mingled awe and wonder speak:
  'My page,' he said, 'arise; —
Leave we this place, my page.' — No more
He uttered till the castle door
They crossed — but there he paused and said,
'My wildness hath awaked the dead —
  Disturbed the sacred tomb!
Methought this night I stood on high
Where Hecla roars in middle sky,
And in her caverned gulfs could spy

The central place of doom;
And there before my mortal eye
Souls of the dead came flitting by,
Whom fiends with many a fiendish cry
Bore to that evil den!
My eyes grew dizzy and my brain
Was wildered, as the elvish train
With shriek and howl dragged on amain,
Those who had late been men.

X

'With haggard eyes and streaming hair,
Jutta the Sorceress was there,
And there passed Wulfstane lately slain,
All crushed and foul with bloody stain. —
More had I seen, but that uprose
A whirlwind wild and swept the snows;
And with such sound as when at need
A champion spurs his horse to speed,
Three armèd knights rush on who lead
Caparisoned a sable steed.
Sable their harness, and there came
Through their closed visors sparks of flame.
The first proclaimed, in sounds of fear,
"Harold the Dauntless, welcome here!"
The next cried, "Jubilee! we've won
Count Witikind the Waster's son!"

And the third rider sternly spoke,
"Mount, in the name of Zernebock! —
From us, O Harold, were thy powers, —
Thy strength, thy dauntlessness are ours;
Nor think, a vassal thou of hell,
With hell can strive." The fiend spoke true!
My inmost soul the summons knew,
As captives know the knell
That says the headsman's sword is bare
And with an accent of despair
Commands them quit their cell.
I felt resistance was in vain,
My foot had that fell stirrup ta'en,
My hand was on the fatal mane,
When to my rescue sped
That palmer's visionary form,
And — like the passing of a storm —
The demons yelled and fled!

XI

'His sable cowl flung back revealed
The features it before concealed;
And, Gunnar, I could find
In him whose counsels strove to stay
So oft my course on wilful way
My father Witikind!
Doomed for his sins and doomed for mine

A wanderer upon earth to pine
Until his son shall turn to grace
And smooth for him a resting-place. —
Gunnar, he must not haunt in vain
This world of wretchedness and pain:
I'll tame my wilful heart to live
In peace — to pity and forgive —
And thou, for so the Vision said,
Must in thy Lord's repentance aid.
Thy mother was a prophetess,
He said, who by her skill could guess
How close the fatal textures join
Which knit thy thread of life with mine;
Then dark he hinted of disguise
She framed to cheat too curious eyes
That not a moment might divide
Thy fated footsteps from my side.
Methought while thus my sire did teach
I caught the meaning of his speech,
Yet seems its purport doubtful now.'
His hand then sought his thoughtful brow —
Then first he marked, that in the tower
His glove was left at waking hour.

XII

Trembling at first and deadly pale,
Had Gunnar heard the visioned tale;

But when he learned the dubious close
He blushed like any opening rose,
And, glad to hide his tell-tale cheek,
Hied back that glove of mail to seek;
When soon a shriek of deadly dread
Summoned his master to his aid.

XIII

What sees Count Harold in that bower
So late his resting-place? —
The semblance of the Evil Power,
Adored by all his race!
Odin in living form stood there,
His cloak the spoils of Polar bear;
For plumy crest a meteor shed
Its gloomy radiance o'er his head,
Yet veiled its haggard majesty
To the wild lightnings of his eye.
Such height was his as when in stone
O'er Upsal's giant altar shown:
So flowed his hoary beard;
Such was his lance of mountain-pine,
So did his sevenfold buckler shine;
But when his voice he reared,
Deep without harshness, slow and strong,
The powerful accents rolled along,

And while he spoke his hand was laid
On captive Gunnar's shrinking head.

XIV

'Harold,' he said, 'what rage is thine
To quit the worship of thy line,
To leave thy Warrior-God? —
With me is glory or disgrace,
Mine is the onset and the chase,
Embattled hosts before my face
Are withered by a nod.
Wilt thou then forfeit that high seat
Deserved by many a dauntless feat
Among the heroes of thy line,
Eric and fiery Thorarine? —
Thou wilt not. Only I can give
The joys for which the valiant live,
Victory and vengeance — only I
Can give the joys for which they die,
The immortal tilt — the banquet full,
The brimming draught from foeman's skull.
Mine art thou, witness this thy glove,
The faithful pledge of vassal's love.'

XV

'Tempter,' said Harold, firm of heart,
'I charge thee, hence! whate'er thou art,

I do defy thee — and resist
The kindling frenzy of my breast,
Waked by thy words; and of my mail
Nor glove nor buckler, splent nor nail,
Shall rest with thee — that youth release,
And, God or Demon, part in peace.' —
'Eivir,' the Shape replied, 'is mine,
Marked in the birth-hour with my sign.
Think'st thou that priest with drops of spray
Could wash that blood-red mark away?
Or that a borrowed sex and name
Can abrogate a Godhead's claim?'
Thrilled this strange speech through Harold's brain,
He clenched his teeth in high disdain,
For not his new-born faith subdued
Some tokens of his ancient mood. —
'Now, by the hope so lately given
Of better trust and purer heaven,
I will assail thee, fiend!' — Then rose
His mace, and with a storm of blows
The mortal and the demon close.

XVI

Smoke rolled above, fire flashed around,
Darkened the sky and shook the ground;
But not the artillery of hell,

The bickering lightning, nor the rock
Of turrets to the earthquake's shock,
  Could Harold's courage quell.
Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
And blows on blows resistless heaped,
  Till quailed that demon form,
And — for his power to hurt or kill
Was bounded by a higher will —
  Evanished in a storm.
Nor paused the Champion of the North,
But raised and bore his Eivir forth
From that wild scene of fiendish strife
To light, to liberty, and life!

XVII

He placed her on a bank of moss,
  A silver runnel bubbled by,
And new-born thoughts his soul engross,
And tremors yet unknown across
  His stubborn sinews fly,
The while with timid hand the dew
Upon her brow and neck he threw,
And marked how life with rosy hue
On her pale cheek revived anew
  And glimmered in her eye.
Inly he said, 'That silken tress —
What blindness mine that could not guess!

Or how could page's rugged dress
That bosom's pride belie?
O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
In search of blood and death to rave,
With such a partner nigh!'

XVIII

Then in the mirrored pool he peered,
Blamed his rough locks and shaggy beard,
The stains of recent conflict cleared, —
And thus the Champion proved
That he fears now who never feared,
And loves who never loved.
And Eivir — life is on her cheek.
And yet she will not move or speak,
Nor will her eyelid fully ope;
Perchance it loves, that half-shut eye,
Through its long fringe, reserved and shy,
Affection's opening dawn to spy;
And the deep blush, which bids its dye
O'er cheek and brow and bosom fly,
Speaks shamefacedness and hope.

XIX

But vainly seems the Dane to seek
For terms his new-born love to speak, —

For words, save those of wrath and wrong,
Till now were strangers to his tongue;
So, when he raised the blushing maid,
In blunt and honest terms he said —
'T were well that maids, when lovers woo,
Heard none more soft, were all as true —
'Eivir! since thou for many a day
Hast followed Harold's wayward way,
It is but meet that in the line
Of after-life I follow thine.
To-morrow is Saint Cuthbert's tide,
And we will grace his altar's side,
A Christian knight and Christian bride;
And of Witikind's son shall the marvel be said
That on the same morn he was christened and wed.'

CONCLUSION

And now, Ennui, what ails thee, weary maid?
And why these listless looks of yawning sorrow?
No need to turn the page as if 'twere lead,
Or fling aside the volume till to-morrow. —
Be cheered — 'tis ended — and I will not borrow,
To try thy patience more, one anecdote
From Bartholine or Perinskiold or Snorro.
Then pardon thou thy minstrel, who hath wrote
A tale six cantos long, yet scorned to add a note.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

A POEM

Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,
And Albert rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,
With Europe's chosen sons, in arms renown'd,
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,
Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd, —
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.

AKENSIDE.

TO

HER GRACE

THE

DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON

PRINCESS OF WATERLOO

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING VERSES

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

ADVERTISEMENT

It may be some apology for the imperfections of this poem, that it was composed hastily, and during a short tour upon the Continent, when the Author's labours were liable to frequent interruption; but its best apology is, that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo Subscription.

ABBOTSFORD, 1815.

I

FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hour
Pealed over orchard and canal,
With voice prolonged and measured fall,
From proud Saint Michael's tower;
Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak between,
Spreads deep and far a pathless screen
Of tangled forest ground.
Stems planted close by stems defy
The adventurous foot — the curious eye
For access seeks in vain;

And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strewed on the blighted ground, receives
  Nor sun nor air nor rain.
No opening glade dawns on our way,
No streamlet glancing to the ray
  Our woodland path has crossed;
And the straight causeway which we tread
Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
Unvarying through the unvaried shade
  Until in distance lost.

II

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds;
In groups the scattering wood recedes,
Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
  And corn-fields glance between;
The peasant at his labour blithe
Plies the hooked staff and shortened scythe:[1] —
  But when these ears were green,
Placed close within destruction's scope,
Full little was that rustic's hope
  Their ripening to have seen!
And, lo! a hamlet and its fane: —
Let not the gazer with disdain
  Their architecture view;
For yonder rude ungraceful shrine

[1] See Note 79.

And disproportioned spire are thine,
Immortal WATERLOO!

III

Fear not the heat, though full and high
The sun has scorched the autumn sky,
And scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood bough;
These fields have seen a hotter day
Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
Yet one mile on — yon shattered hedge
Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge
Looks on the field below,
And sinks so gently on the dale
That not the folds of Beauty's veil
In easier curves can flow.
Brief space from thence the ground again
Ascending slowly from the plain
Forms an opposing screen,
Which with its crest of upland ground
Shuts the horizon all around.
The softened vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread;
Not the most timid maid need dread
To give her snow-white palfrey head
On that wide stubble-ground;
Nor wood nor tree nor bush are there,

Her course to intercept or scare,
Nor fosse nor fence are found,
Save where from out her shattered bowers
Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

IV

Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene
Can tell of that which late hath been? —
A stranger might reply,
'The bare extent of stubble-plain
Seems lately lightened of its grain;
And yonder sable tracks remain
Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain
When harvest-home was nigh.
On these broad spots of trampled ground
Perchance the rustics danced such round
As Teniers loved to draw;
And where the earth seems scorched by flame,
To dress the homely feast they came,
And toiled the kerchiefed village dame
Around her fire of straw.'

V

So deem'st thou — so each mortal deems
Of that which is from that which seems: —
But other harvest here

Than that which peasant's scythe demands
Was gathered in by sterner hands,
With bayonet, blade, and spear.
No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest thin and cheap!
Heroes before each fatal sweep
Fell thick as ripened grain;
And ere the darkening of the day,
Piled high as autumn shocks there lay
The ghastly harvest of the fray,
The corpses of the slain.

VI

Ay, look again — that line so black
And trampled marks the bivouac,
Yon deep-graved ruts the artillery's track,
So often lost and won;
And close beside the hardened mud
Still shows where, fetlock-deep in blood,
The fierce dragoon through battle's flood
Dashed the hot war-horse on.
These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell —
And feel'st thou not the tainted steam
That reeks against the sultry beam
From yonder trenchèd mound?

The pestilential fumes declare
That Carnage has replenished there
Her garner-house profound.

VII

Far other harvest-home and feast
Than claims the boor from scythe released
On these scorched fields were known!
Death hovered o'er the maddening rout,
And in the thrilling battle-shout
Sent for the bloody banquet out
A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy.
Well could his ear in ecstasy
Distinguish every tone
That filled the chorus of the fray —
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadrons' wild hurra,
From the wild clang that marked their way, —
Down to the dying groan
And the last sob of life's decay
When breath was all but flown.

VIII

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
Feast on! — but think not that a strife

With such promiscuous carnage rife
  Protracted space may last;
The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
  And cease when these are past.
Vain hope! — that morn's o'erclouded sun
Heard the wild shout of fight begun
  Ere he attained his height,
And through the war-smoke volumed high
Still peals that unremitted cry,
  Though now he stoops to night.
For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
Fresh succours from the extended head
Of either hill the contest fed;
  Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns pausèd not,
Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot;
  For all that war could do
Of skill and force was proved that day,
And turned not yet the doubtful fray
  On bloody Waterloo.

IX

Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,[1]
When ceaseless from the distant line
  Continued thunders came!

[1] See Note 80.

Each burgher held his breath to hear
These forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame
What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
When, rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded showed their mangled plight
In token of the unfinished fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain!
How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell invader come,
While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory brand! —
Cheer thee, fair city! From yon stand
Impatient still his outstretched hand
Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood
And all unwont to be withstood,
He fires the fight again.

X

'On! On!' was still his stern exclaim;[1]
'Confront the battery's jaws of flame!
Rush on the levelled gun!'
My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
Each Hulan forward with his lance,

[1] See Note 81.

My Guard — my chosen — charge for France,
France and Napoleon!'
Loud answered their acclaiming shout,
Greeting the mandate which sent out
Their bravest and their best to dare
The fate their leader shunned to share,[1]
But HE, his country's sword and shield,
Still in the battle-front revealed
Where danger fiercest swept the field,
Came like a beam of light,
In action prompt, in sentence brief —
'Soldiers, stand firm!' exclaimed the chief,
'England shall tell the fight!'[2]

XI

On came the whirlwind — like the last
But fiercest sweep of tempest-blast —
On came the whirlwind — steel-gleams broke
Like lightning through the rolling smoke;
The war was waked anew,
Three hundred cannon-mouths roared loud,
And from their throats with flash and cloud
Their showers of iron threw.
Beneath their fire in full career
Rushed on the ponderous cuirassier,
The lancer couched his ruthless spear,

[1] See Note 82. [2] See Note 83.

And hurrying as to havoc near
The cohorts' eagles flew.
In one dark torrent broad and strong
The advancing onset rolled along,
Forth harbingered by fierce acclaim,
That from the shroud of smoke and flame
Pealed wildly the imperial name.

XII

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host;
For not an eye the storm that viewed
Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
Nor was one forward footstep staid,
As dropped the dying and the dead.
Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
Fast they renewed each serried square;
And on the wounded and the slain
Closed their diminished files again,
Till from their lines scarce spears' lengths three
Emerging from the smoke they see
Helmet and plume and panoply —
Then waked their fire at once!
Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,
As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day.

Then down went helm and lance,
Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corselets were pierced and pennons rent;
And to augment the fray,
Wheeled full against their staggering flanks,
The English horsemen's foaming ranks
Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds
The clash of swords, the neigh of steeds,
As plies the smith his clanging trade,[1]
Against the cuirass rang the blade;
And while amid their close array
The well-served cannon rent their way,
And while amid their scattered band
Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
Recoiled in common rout and fear
Lancer and guard and cuirassier,
Horsemen and foot, — a mingled host,
Their leaders fallen, their standards lost.

XIII

Then, WELLINGTON! thy piercing eye
This crisis caught of destiny —
The British host had stood
That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance

[1] See Note 84.

As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
But when thy voice had said, 'Advance!'
They were their ocean's flood. —
O thou whose inauspicious aim
Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,
Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
The terrors of yon rushing tide?
Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of levelled steel?[1]
Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,
And other standards fly? —
Think not that in yon columns file
Thy conquering troops from distant Dyle —
Is Blucher yet unknown?
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,
What notes of hate and vengeance thrill
In Prussia's trumpet tone? —
What yet remains? — shall it be thine
To head the relics of thy line
In one dread effort more? —
The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
And thou canst tell what fortune proved
That chieftain who of yore

[1] See Note 85.

Ambition's dizzy paths essayed,
And with the gladiators' aid
  For empire enterprised —
He stood the cast his rashness played,
Left not the victims he had made,
Dug his red grave with his own blade,
And on the field he lost was laid,
  Abhorred — but not despised.

XIV

But if revolves thy fainter thought
On safety — howsoever bought —
Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
Though twice ten thousand men have died
  On this eventful day,
To gild the military fame
Which thou for life in traffic tame
  Wilt barter thus away.
Shall future ages tell this tale
Of inconsistence faint and frail?
And art thou he of Lodi's bridge,
Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge!
  Or is thy soul like mountain-tide
That, swelled by winter storm and shower,
Rolls down in turbulence of power
  A torrent fierce and wide;
Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,

Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
Whose channel shows displayed
The wrecks of its impetuous course,
But not one symptom of the force
By which these wrecks were made!

XV

Spur on thy way! — since now thine ear
Has brooked thy veterans' wish to hear,
Who as thy flight they eyed
Exclaimed — while tears of anguish came,
Wrung forth by pride and rage and shame —
'O, that he had but died!'
But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
Look ere thou leavest the fatal hill
Back on yon broken ranks —
Upon whose wild confusion gleams
The moon, as on the troubled streams
When rivers break their banks,
And to the ruined peasant's eye
Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
Down the dread current hurled —
So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
Of warriors who when morn begun
Defied a banded world.

XVI

List — frequent to the hurrying rout,
The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
Tells that upon their broken rear
Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.
So fell a shriek was none
When Beresina's icy flood
Reddened and thawed with flame and blood
And, pressing on thy desperate way,
Raised oft and long their wild hurra
The children of the Don.
Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
So ominous when, all bereft
Of aid, the valiant Polack left —
Ay, left by thee — found soldier's grave
In Leipsic's corpse-encumbered wave.
Fate, in these various perils past,
Reserved thee still some future cast;
On the dread die thou now hast thrown
Hangs not a single field alone,
Nor one campaign — thy martial fame,
Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
Have felt the final stroke;
And now o'er thy devoted head
The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
The last dread seal is broke.

XVII

Since live thou wilt — refuse not now
Before these demagogues to bow,
Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
Who shall thy once imperial fate
Make wordy theme of vain debate. —
Or shall we say thou stoop'st less low
In seeking refuge from the foe,
Against whose heart in prosperous life
Thine hand hath ever held the knife?
Such homage hath been paid
By Roman and by Grecian voice,
And there were honour in the choice,
If it were freely made.
Then safely come — in one so low, —
So lost, — we cannot own a foe;
Though dear experience bid us end,
In thee we ne'er can hail a friend. —
Come, howsoe'er — but do not hide
Close in thy heart that germ of pride
Erewhile by gifted bard espied,
That 'yet imperial hope';
Think not that for a fresh rebound,
To raise ambition from the ground,
We yield thee means or scope.
In safety come — but ne'er again

Hold type of independent reign;
No islet calls thee lord,
We leave thee no confederate band,
No symbol of thy lost command,
To be a dagger in the hand
From which we wrenched the sword.

XVIII

Yet, even in yon sequestered spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot
Than yet thy life has known;
Conquest unbought by blood or harm,
That needs nor foreign aid nor arm,
A triumph all thine own.
Such waits thee when thou shalt control
Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,
That marred thy prosperous scene: —
Hear this — from no unmovèd heart,
Which sighs, comparing what THOU ART
With what thou MIGHTST HAVE BEEN!

XIX

Thou too, whose deeds of fame renewed
Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
To thine own noble heart must owe
More than the meed she can bestow.
For not a people's just acclaim,

Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
Thy prince's smiles, thy state's decree,
The ducal rank, the gartered knee,
Not these such pure delight afford
As that, when hanging up thy sword,
Well mayst thou think, 'This honest steel
Was ever drawn for public weal;
And, such was rightful Heaven's decree,
Ne'er sheathed unless with victory!'

XX

Look forth once more with softened heart
Ere from the field of fame we part;
Triumph and sorrow border near,
And joy oft melts into a tear.
Alas! what links of love that morn
Has War's rude hand asunder torn!
For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.
Here piled in common slaughter sleep
Those whom affection long shall weep:
Here rests the sire that ne'er shall strain
His orphans to his heart again;
The son whom on his native shore
The parent's voice shall bless no more;
The bridegroom who has hardly pressed
His blushing consort to his breast;

The husband whom through many a year
Long love and mutual faith endear.
Thou canst not name one tender tie
But here dissolved its relics lie!
O, when thou see'st some mourner's veil
Shroud her thin form and visage pale,
Or mark'st the matron's bursting tears
Stream when the stricken drum she hears,
Or see'st how manlier grief suppressed
Is labouring in a father's breast, —
With no inquiry vain pursue
The cause, but think on Waterloo!

XXI

Period of honour as of woes,
What bright careers 't was thine to close! —
Marked on thy roll of blood what names
To Briton's memory and to Fame's
Laid there their last immortal claims!
Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
Redoubted PICTON'S soul of fire —
Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
All that of PONSONBY could die —
DE LANCEY change Love's bridal-wreath
For laurels from the hand of Death —
Saw'st gallant MILLER'S failing eye
Still bent where Albion's banners fly,

And CAMERON in the shock of steel
Die like the offspring of Lochiel;
And generous GORDON mid the strife
Fall while he watched his leader's life. —
Ah! though her guardian angel's shield
Fenced Britain's hero through the field,
Fate not the less her power made known
Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own!

XXII

Forgive, brave dead, the imperfect lay!
Who may your names, your numbers, say?
What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
To each the dear-earned praise assign,
From high-born chiefs of martial fame
To the poor soldier's lowlier name?
Lightly ye rose that dawning day
From your cold couch of swamp and clay,
To fill before the sun was low
The bed that morning cannot know. —
Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
And sacred be the heroes' sleep
  Till time shall cease to run;
And ne'er beside their noble grave
May Briton pass and fail to crave
A blessing on the fallen brave
  Who fought with Wellington!

XXIII

Farewell, sad field! whose blighted face
Wears desolation's withering trace;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shattered huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong
That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont!
Yet though thy garden's green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shattered beeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blackened portals torn
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
Has not such havoc bought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame?
Yes — Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new;
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remembered long,
Shall live the towers of Hougomont
And Field of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION

STERN tide of human time! that know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
Successive generations to their doom;
While thy capacious stream has equal room
For the gay bark where Pleasure's streamers sport
And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
The fisher-skiff and barge that bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port; —

Stern tide of time! through what mysterious change
Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven!
For ne'er before vicissitude so strange
Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.
And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
Such unexpected bursts of joy and woe,
Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know
Until the awful term when thou shalt cease to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my Country! — the brave
fight
Hast well maintained through good report and ill;

In thy just cause and in thy native might,
And in Heaven's grace and justice constant still;
Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill
Of half the world against thee stood arrayed,
Or when with better views and freer will
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid — though slowly rose,
And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
While like the dawn that in the orient glows.
On the broad wave its earlier lustre came;
Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
And Maida's myrtles gleamed beneath its ray,
Where first the soldier, stung with generous shame,
Rivalled the heroes of the watery way,
And washed in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
Gallant Saint George, the flower of chivalry,
For thou hast faced like him a dragon foe,
And rescued innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down like him tyrannic might,
And to the gazing world mayst proudly show
The chosen emblem of thy sainted knight,
Who quelled devouring pride and vindicated right.

Yet mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired,
Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down:
'T is not alone the heart with valour fired,
The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known; —
Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired —
'T is constancy in the good cause alone
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

NOTES

Note 1, p. 11

Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly Uaighmor, is a mountain to the northeast of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said by tradition to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this stronghold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small enclosure or recess surrounded with large rocks, and open above head. It may have been originally designed as a toil for deer, who might get in from the outside but would find it difficult to return. This opinion prevails among the old sportsmen and deer-stalkers in the neighbourhood.

Note 2, p. 14

'The hounds which we call Saint Hubert's hounds, are commonly all blacke, yet neuertheless, their race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St. Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace. Whereupon we may concieue that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise. To return vnto my former purpose, this kind of dogges hath beene dispersed through the counties of Henault, Lorayne, Flanders, and Burgoyne. They are mighty of body, neuertheless their legges are low and short, likewise they are not swift, although they be very good of sent, hunting chaces which are farre straggled, fearing neither water nor cold, and doe more couet the chaces that smell, as foxes, bore, and such like, than

other, because they find themselves neither of swiftness nor courage to hunt and kill the chaces that are lighter and swifter. The bloodhounds of this colour proue good, especially those that are cole blacke, but I made no great account to breede on them, or to keepe the kind, and yet I found a book which a hunter did dedicate to a prince of Lorayne, which seemed to loue hunting much, wherein was a blason which the same hunter gaue to his bloodhound, called Souyllard, which was white: —

> My name came first from holy Hubert's race,
> Souyllard my sire, a hound of singular grace.

Whereupon we may presume that some of the kind prooue white sometimes, but they are not of the kind of the Greffiers or Bouxes, which we haue at these dayes.' (*The noble Art of Venerie or Hunting, translated and collected for the Use of all Noblemen and Gentlemen*, London, 1611, 4to, p. 15.)

Note 3, p. 15

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horn being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar, as the old rhyme testifies: —

> If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier,
> But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal, therefore thou need'st not fear.

At all times, however, the task was dangerous, and to be adventured upon wisely and warily, either by getting behind the stag while he was gazing on the hounds, or by watching an opportunity to gallop roundly in upon him and kill him with the sword. See many directions to this purpose in the *Booke of Hunting*, chap. 41. Wilson the historian has recorded a providential escape which befell him in this hazardous sport, while a youth and follower of the Earl of Essex.

'Sir Peter Lee, of Lime, in Cheshire, invited my lord one summer to hunt the stagg. And having a great stagg in chase,

and many gentlemen in the pursuit, the stagg took soyle. And divers, whereof I was one, alighted, and stood with swords drawne, to have a cut at him, at his coming out of the water. The staggs there being wonderfully fierce and dangerous, made us youths more eager to be at him. But he escaped us all. And it was my misfortune to be hindered of my coming nere him, the way being sliperie, by a falle; which gave occasion to some, who did not know mee, to speak as if I had falne for feare. Which being told mee, I left the stagg, and followed the gentleman who [first] spake it. But I found him of that cold temper, that it seems his words made an escape from him; as by his denial and repentance it appeared. But this made mee more violent in the pursuit of the stagg, to recover my reputation. And I happened to be the only horseman in, when the dogs sett him up at bay; and approaching near him on horsebacke, he broke through the dogs, and run at mee, and tore my horse's side with his hornes, close by my thigh. Then I quitted my horse, and grew more cunning, (for the dogs had sette him up againe,) stealing behind him with my sword, and cut his hamstrings; and then got upon his back, and cut his throate; which, as I was doing, the company came in, and blamed my rashness for running such a hazard.' (Peck's *Desiderata Curiosa*, II, 464.)

NOTE 4, p. 20

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile, called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder composed of the branches and roots of trees.

NOTE 5, p. 22

The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their Lowland neighbours.

'In former times, those parts of this district, which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible by strong barriers of rocks, and mountains, and lakes. It was a border country, and though on the very verge of the low country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to society. 'T is well known that in the Highlands, it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another; and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district, by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners.' (Graham's *Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire*, Edinburgh, 1806, p. 97.)

The reader will therefore be pleased to remember that the scene of this poem is laid in a time, —

> When tooming faulds, or sweeping of a glen,
> Had still been held the deed of gallant men.

Note 6, p. 28

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the second-sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin, a steady believer in the second-sight, gives the following account of it: —

'The second-sight is a singular faculty, of seeing an otherwise invisible object, without any previous means used by the person that used it for that end; the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see, nor think of any thing else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object which was represented to them.

'At the sight of a vision, the eyelids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by, when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me.

'There is one in Skie, of whom his acquaintance observed, that when he sees a vision, the inner part of his eyelids turns so far upwards, that, after the object disappears, he must draw them down with his fingers, and sometimes employ others to draw them down, which he finds to be the much easier way.

'This faculty of the second-sight does not lineally descend in a family, as some imagine, for I know several parents who are endowed with it, but their children not, and *vice versa;* neither is it acquired by any previous compact. And, after a strict enquiry, I could never learn that this faculty was communicable any way whatsoever.

'The seer knows neither the object, time, nor place of a vision, before it appears; and the same object is often seen by different persons, living at a considerable distance from one another. The true way of judging as to the time and circumstance of an object, is by observation; for several persons of judgment, without this faculty, are more capable to judge of the design of a vision, than a novice that is a seer. If an object appear in the day or night, it will come to pass sooner or later accordingly.

'If an object is seen early in the morning, (which is not frequent,) it will be accomplished in a few hours afterwards. If at noon, it will commonly be accomplished that very day. If in the evening, perhaps that night; if after candles be lighted, it will be accomplished that night: the later always in accomplishment, by weeks, months, and sometimes years, according to the time of night the vision is seen.

'When a shroud is perceived about one, it is a sure prognostic of death; the time is judged according to the height of it about the person; for if it is seen above the middle, death is not to be expected for the space of a year, and perhaps some months longer; and as it is frequently seen to ascend higher towards the

head, death is concluded to be at hand within a few days, if not hours, as daily experience confirms. Examples of this kind were shown me, when the persons of whom the observations were then made, enjoyed perfect health.

'One instance was later foretold by a seer, that was a novice, concerning the death of one of my acquaintance; this was communicated to a few only, and with great confidence: I being one of the number, did not in the least regard it, until the death of the person, about the time foretold, did confirm me of the certainty of the prediction. The novice mentioned above is now a skilful seer, as appears from many late instances; he lives in the parish of St. Mary's, the most northern in Skie.

'If a woman is seen standing at a man's left hand, it is a presage that she will be his wife, whether they be married to others, or unmarried at the time of the apparition.

'If two or three women are seen at once near a man's left hand, she that is next him will undoubtedly be his wife first, and so on, whether all three, or the man, be single or married at the time of the vision or not; of which there are several late instances among those of my acquaintance. It is an ordinary thing for them to see a man that is to come to the house shortly after: and if he is not of the seer's acquaintance, yet he gives such a lively description of his stature, complexion, habit, &c. that upon his arrival he answers the character given him in all respects.

'If the person so appearing be one of the seer's acquaintance, he will tell his name, as well as other particulars; and he can tell by his countenance whether he comes in a good or bad humour.

'I have been seen thus myself by seers of both sexes, at some hundred miles' distance; some that saw me in this manner had never seen me personally, and it happened according to their vision, without any previous design of mine to go to those places, my coming there being purely accidental.

'It is ordinary with them to see houses, gardens, and trees, in places void of all three; and this in progress of time uses to be accomplished: as at Mogshot, in the Isle of Skie, where there were but a few sorry cowhouses, thatched with straw, yet in a

very few years after, the vision, which appeared often, was accomplished, by the building of several good houses on the very spot represented by the seers, and by the planting of orchards there.

'To see a spark of fire fall upon one's arm or breast, is a forerunner of a dead child to be seen in the arms of those persons; of which there are several fresh instances.

'To see a seat empty at the time of one's sitting in it, is a presage of that person's death soon after.

'When a novice, or one that has lately obtained the second-sight, sees a vision in the night-time without doors, and he be near a fire, he presently falls into a swoon.

'Some find themselves as it were in a crowd of people, having a corpse which they carry along with them; and after such visions the seers come in sweating, and describe the people that appeared: if there be any of their acquaintance among 'em, they give an account of their names, as also of the bearers, but they know nothing concerning the corpse.

'All those who have the second-sight do not always see these visions at once, though they be together at the time. But if one who has this faculty, designedly touch his fellow-seer at the instant of a vision's appearing, then the second sees it as well as the first; and this is sometimes discerned by those that are near them on such occasions.' (Martin's *Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo, p. 300 *et seq.*)

To these particulars innumerable examples might be added, all attested by grave and credible authors. But in despite of evidence which neither Bacon, Boyle, nor Johnson were able to resist, the *Taish* with all its visionary properties seems to be now universally abandoned to the use of poetry. The exquisitely beautiful poem of *Lochiel* will at once occur to the recollection of every reader.

Note 7, p. 30

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains,

some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden.

'It was situated in the face of a very rough, high, and rocky mountain, called Letternilichk, still a part of Benalder, full of great stones and crevices, and some scattered wood interspersed. The habitation called the Cage, in the face of that mountain, was within a small thick bush of wood. There were first some rows of trees laid down, in order to level the floor for a habitation; and as the place was steep, this raised the lower side to an equal height with the other: and these trees, in the way of joists or planks, were levelled with earth and gravel. There were betwixt the trees, growing naturally on their own roots, some stakes fixed in the earth, which, with the trees, were interwoven with ropes, made of heath and birch twigs, up to the top of the Cage, it being of a round or rather oval shape; and the whole thatched and covered over with fog. The whole fabric hung, as it were, by a large tree, which reclined from the one end, all along the roof, to the other, and which gave it the name of the Cage; and by chance there happened to be two stones at a small distance from one another, in the side next the precipice, resembling the pillars of a chimney, where the fire was placed. The smoke had its vent out here, all along the fall of the rock, which was so much of the same colour, that one could discover no difference in the clearest day.' (Home's *History of the Rebellion*, London, 1802, 4to, p. 381.)

Note 8, p. 33

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. There is a romance in the Auchinleck MS., in which Ferragus is thus described: —

On a day come tiding
Unto Charls the King,
Al of a doughti knight
Was comen to Navers,
Stout he was and fers,
Vernagu he hight.
Of Babiloun the soudan
Thider him sende gan,
With King Charls to fight.
So hard he was to-fond[1]
That no dint of brond
No greued him, aplight.
He hadde twenti men strengthe
And forti fet of lengthe,
Thilke painim hede,[2]
And four feet in the face,
Y-meten[3] in the place,
And fifteen in brede.[4]
His nose was a fot and more;
His brow, as bristles wore;[5]
He that it seighe it sede.
He loked lotheliche,
And was swart[6] as any piche,
Of him men might adrede.

Romance of Charlemagne, ll. 461–484; Auchinleck MS., fol. 265.

Ascapart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the *History of Bevis of Hampton*, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of a gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Sir Bevis himself. The dimensions of Ascabart were little inferior to those of Ferragus, if the following description be correct: —

They metten with a geaunt,
With a lotheliche semblaunt.
He was wonderliche strong,
Rome[7] thretti fote long.
His berd was bot gret and rowe;[8]
A space of a fot betweene is[9] browe:
His clob was, to yeue[10] a strok,
A lite bodi of an oak.[11]

Beues hadde of him wonder gret,
And askede him what a het,[12]
And yaf[13] men of his contre
Were ase meche[14] ase was he.
'Me name,' a sede,[15] 'is Ascopard,
Garci me sent hiderward,
For to bring this quene ayen,
And the Beues her of-slen.'[16]

[1] Found, proved. [2] Had. [3] Measured. [4] Breadth. [5] Were. [6] Black.
[7] Fully. [8] Rough. [9] His. [10] Give. [11] The stem of a little oak-tree.
[12] He hight, was called. [13] If. [14] Great. [15] He said. [16] Slay.

Icham Garci is[1] champioun,
And was i-driue out of me[2] toun
Al for that ich was so lite.[3]
Eueri man me wolde smite,
Ich was so lite and so merugh,[4]
Eueri man me clepede dwerugh.[5]
And now icham in this londe,
I wax mor[6] ich understonde,
And stranger than other tene;[7]
And that schel on us be sene.'

Sir Bevis of Hampton, l. 2512; Auchinleck MS., fol. 189.

NOTE 9, p. 33

The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name or lineage before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.

NOTE 10, p. 35

'They' (meaning the Highlanders) 'delight much in musicke, but chiefly in harps and clairschoes of their own fashion. The strings of the clairschoes are made of brass wire, and the strings of the harps of sinews; which strings they strike either with their nayles, growing long, or else with an instrument appointed for that use. They take great pleasure to decke their harps and clairschoes with silver and precious stones; the poore ones that cannot attayne hereunto, decke them with christall. They sing verses prettily compound, contayning (for the most part) prayses of valiant men. There is not almost any other argument, whereof their rhymes intreat. They speak the ancient French language, altered a little.'[8]

'The harp and clairschoes are now only heard of in the Highlands in ancient song. At what period these instruments ceased to be used, is not on record; and tradition is silent on this head.

[1] His. [2] My. [3] Little. [4] Lean. [5] Dwarf. [6] Greater, taller. [7] Ten.
[8] *Certayne Matters concerning the Realme of Scotland, etc., as they were Anno Domini 1597*. London, 1603, 4to.

But, as Irish harpers occasionally visited the Highlands and Western Isles till lately, the harp might have been extant so late as the middle of the present century. Thus far we know, that from remote times down to the present, harpers were received as welcome guests, particularly in the Highlands of Scotland; and so late as the latter end of the sixteenth century, as appears by the above quotation, the harp was in common use among the natives of the Western Isles. How it happened that the noisy and inharmonious bagpipe banished the soft and expressive harp, we cannot say; but certain it is, that the bagpipe is now the only instrument that obtains universally in the Highland districts.' (Campbell's *Journey through North Britain*, London, 1808, 4to, I, 175.)

Mr. Gunn of Edinburgh has lately published a curious *Essay upon the Harp and Harp Music of the Highlands of Scotland*. That the instrument was once in common use there is most certain. Cleland numbers an acquaintance with it among the few accomplishments which his satire allows to the Highlanders: —

> In nothing they 're accounted sharp,
> Except in bagpipe or in harp.

NOTE 11, p. 41

That Highland chieftains to a late period retained in their service the bard, as a family officer, admits of very easy proof. The author of the *Letters from the North of Scotland*, an officer of engineers, quartered at Inverness about 1720, who certainly cannot be deemed a favourable witness, gives the following account of the office, and of a bard, whom he heard exercise his talent of recitation: —

'The bard is skilled in the genealogy of all the Highland families, sometimes preceptor to the young laird, celebrates in Irish verse the original of the tribe, the famous warlike actions of the successive heads, and sings his own lyricks as an opiate to the chief, when indisposed for sleep; but poets are not equally esteemed and honoured in all countries. I happened to be a witness of the dishonour done to the muse, at the house of one of the

chiefs, where two of these bards were set at a good distance, at the lower end of a long table, with a parcel of Highlanders of no extraordinary appearance, over a cup of ale. Poor inspiration! They were not asked to drink a glass of wine at our table, though the whole company consisted only of the *great man*, one of his near relations, and myself. After some little time, the chief ordered one of them to sing me a Highland song. The bard readily obeyed, and with a hoarse voice, and in a tune of few various notes, began, as I was told, one of his own lyricks: and when he had proceeded to the fourth or fifth stanza, I perceived, by the names of several persons, glens, and mountains, which I had known or heard of before, that it was an account of some clan battle. But in his going on, the chief (who piques himself upon his school-learning) at some particular passage, bid him cease, and cryed out, "There's nothing like that in Virgil or Homer." I bowed, and told him I believed so. This you may believe was very edifying and delightful.' (*Letters*, II, 167.)

Note 12, p. 45

The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which for metrical reasons is here spelled after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realised his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And notwithstanding the severity of his temper and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the Nonconformists during the reigns of Charles II and James II

NOTE 13, p. 46

I am not prepared to show that St. Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for St. Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound.

'But labouring once in these mechanic arts for a devout matrone that had sett him on work, his violl, that hung by him on the wall, of its own accord, without anie man's helpe, distinctly sounded this anthime: *Gaudent in cœlis animæ sanctorum qui Christi vestigia sunt secuti; et quia pro eius amore sanguinem suum fuderunt, ideo cum Christo gaudent æternum.* Whereat all the companie being much astonished, turned their eyes from beholding him working, to looke on that strange accident. . . . Not long after, manie of the court that hitherunto had borne a kind of fayned freindship towards him, began now greatly to envie at his progresse and rising in goodnes, using manie crooked, backbiting meanes to diffame his vertues with the black maskes of hypocrisie. And the better to authorise their calumnie, they brought in this that happened in the violl, affirming it to have been done by art magick. What more? this wicked rumour encreased dayly, till the king and others of the nobilitie taking hould thereof, Dunstan grew odious in their sight. Therefore he resolued to leaue the court, and goe to Elphegus, surnamed the Bauld, then bishop of Winchester, who was his cozen. Which his enemies understanding, they layd wayt for him in the way, and hauing throwne him off his horse, beate him, and dragged him in the durt in the most miserable manner, meaning to have slaine him, had not a companie of mastiue dogges, that came unlookt uppon them, defended and redeemed him from their crueltie. When with sorrow he was ashamed to see dogges more humane than they. And giuing thankes to Almightie God, he sensibly againe perceiued that the tunes of his violl had giuen him a warning of future accidents.' (*Flower of the Lives of the*

most renowned Saincts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, by the R. Father Hierome Porter, Doway, 1632, 4to, I, 438.)

The same supernatural circumstance is alluded to by the anonymous author of *Grim, the Collier of Croydon.*

[*Dunstan's harp sounds on the wall.*]

Forest. Hark, hark, my lords, the holy abbot's harp
Sounds by itself so hanging on the wall!
Dunstan. Unhallow'd man, that scorn'st the sacred rede,
Hark, how the testimony of my truth
Sounds heavenly music with an angel's hand,
To testify Dunstan's integrity,
And prove thy active boast of no effect.

NOTE 14, p. 47

The downfall of the Douglases of the house of Angus, during the reign of James V, is the event alluded to in the text. The Earl of Angus, it will be remembered, had married the queen dowager, and availed himself of the right which he thus acquired, as well as of his extensive power, to retain the king in a sort of tutelage which approached very near to captivity. Several open attempts were made to rescue James from this thraldom, with which he was well known to be deeply disgusted; but the valour of the Douglases and their allies gave them the victory in every conflict. At length the king, while residing at Falkland, contrived to escape by night out of his own court and palace, and rode full speed to Stirling Castle, where the governor, who was of the opposite faction, joyfully received him. Being thus at liberty, James speedily summoned around him such peers as he knew to be most inimical to the domination of Angus and laid his complaint before them, says Pitscottie, 'with great lamentations: showing to them how he was holden in subjection, thir years bygone, by the Earl of Angus, and his kin and friends, who oppressed the whole country, and spoiled it, under the pretence of justice and his authority; and had slain many of his lieges, kinsmen, and friends, because they would have had it mended at their hands, and put him at liberty, as he ought to have been, at the counsel of his whole lords, and not have been subjected

and corrected with no particular men, by the rest of his nobles: Therefore, said he, I desire, my lords, that I may be satisfied of the said earl, his kin, and friends; for I avow, that Scotland shall not hold us both, while [i.e., till] I be revenged on him and his.

'The lords hearing the king's complaint and lamentation, and also the great rage, fury, and malice, that he bore toward the Earl of Angus, his kin and friends, they concluded all, and thought it best that he should be summoned to underly the law; if he found no caution, nor yet compear himself, that he should be put to the horn, with all his kin and friends, so many as were contained in the letters. And farther, the lords ordained, by advice of his majesty, that his brother and friends should be summoned to find caution to underly the law within a certain day, or else be put to the horn. But the earl appeared not, nor none for him; and so he was put to the horn, with all his kin and friends: so many as were contained in the summons, that compeared not, were banished, and holden traitors to the king.'

Note 15, p. 50

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. The following instance of the murder of Sir William Stuart of Ochiltree called "The Bloody," by the celebrated Francis, Earl of Bothwell, may be produced among many; but as the offence given in the royal court will hardly bear a vernacular translation, I shall leave the story in Johnstone's Latin, referring for further particulars to the naked simplicity of Birrell's *Diary*, July 30, 1588.

'*Mors improbi hominis non tam ipsa immerita, quam pessimo exemplo in publicum, fœdè perpetrata. Gulielmus Stuartus Alkiltrius, Arani frater, naturâ ac moribus, cujus sæpius memini, vulgo propter sitem sanguinis* sanguinarius *dictus, à Bothvelio, in Sanctæ*

Crucis Regiâ, exardescente irâ, mendacii probro lacessitus, obscœnum osculum liberius retorquebat; Bothvelius hanc contumeliam tacitus tulit, sed ingentum irarum molem animo concepit. Utrinque postridie Edinburgi conventum, totidem numero comitibus armatis, præsidii causa, et acriter pugnatum est; cæteris amicis et clientibus metu torpentibus, aut vi absterritis, ipse Stuartus fortissimè dimicat; tandem excusso gladio à Bothvelio, Scythicâ feritate transfoditur, sine cujusquam misericordiâ; habuit itaque quem debuit exitum. Dignus erat Stuartus qui pateretur; Bothvelius qui faceret. Vulgus sanguinem sanguine prædicabit, et horum cruore innocuorum manibus egregiè parentatum.' (Johnstoni *Historia Rerum Britannicarum*, ab anno 1572 ad annum 1628. Amstelodami, 1655, fol. p. 135.)

Note 16, p. 51

The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus (afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton), lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise James the Grieve, (*i.e.*, reve or bailiff.) 'And as he bore the name,' says Godscroft, 'so did he also execute the office of a grieve or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle of him with whom he lived.' From the habits of frugality and observation which he acquired in his humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honourable economy by which he repaired and established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton. (*History of the House of Douglas*, Edinburgh, 1743, II, 160.)

Note 17, p. 52

The parish of Kilmaronock at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond derives its name from a cell or chapel dedicated to St. Maronoch, or Marnoch, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered. There is a fountain devoted to him in the same parish; but its virtues, like the merits of its patron, have fallen into oblivion.

Note 18, p. 52

This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Callender, in Menteith. Above a chasm, where the brook precipitates itself from a height of at least fifty feet, there is thrown, for the convenience of the neighbourhood, a rustic footbridge of about three feet in breadth and without ledges, which is scarcely to be crossed by a stranger without awe and apprehension.

Note 19, p. 54

Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises that he acquired the epithet of Tine-man, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. He was vanquished, as every reader must remember, in the bloody battle of Homildon-hill, near Wooler, where he himself lost an eye and was made prisoner by Hotspur. He was no less unfortunate when allied with Percy, being wounded and taken at the battle of Shrewsbury. He was so unsuccessful in an attempt to besiege Roxburgh Castle that it was called the 'Foul Raid,' or disgraceful expedition. His ill fortune left him indeed at the battle of Beaugé, in France; but it was only to return with double emphasis at the subsequent action of Vernoil, the last and most unlucky of his encounters, in which he fell, with the flower of the Scottish chivalry, then serving as auxiliaries in France, and about two thousand common soldiers, A.D. 1424.

NOTE 20, p. 54

The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time. The wonderful sword Skofnung, wielded by the celebrated Hrolf Kraka, was of this description. It was deposited in the tomb of the monarch at death, and taken from thence by Skeggo, a celebrated pirate, who bestowed it upon his son-in-law, Kormak, with the following curious directions: — '"The manner of using it will appear strange to you. A small bag is attached to it, which take heed not to violate. Let not the rays of the sun touch the upper part of the handle, nor unsheathe it, unless thou art ready for battle. But when thou comest to the place of fight, go aside from the rest, grasp and extend the sword, and breathe upon it. Then a small worm will creep out of the handle; lower the handle, that he may more easily return into it." Kormak, after having received the sword, returned home to his mother. He showed the sword, and attempted to draw it, as unnecessarily as ineffectually, for he could not pluck it out of the sheath. His mother, Dalla, exclaimed, "Do not despise the counsel given to thee, my son." Kormak however, repeating his efforts, pressed down the handle with his feet, and tore off the bag, when Skofnung emitted a hollow groan; but still he could not unsheathe the sword. Kormak then went out with Bessus, whom he had challenged to fight with him, and drew apart at the place of combat. He sat down upon the ground, and ungirding the sword, which he bore above his vestments, did not remember to shield the hilt from the rays of the sun. In vain he endeavoured to draw it, till he placed his foot against the hilt; then the worm issued from it. But Kormak did not rightly handle the weapon, in consequence whereof good fortune deserted it. As he unsheathed Skofnung, it emitted a hollow murmur.' (*Bartholini de Causis Contemptæ a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis, Libri Tres*, Hafniæ, 1689, 4to, p. 574.)

To the history of this sentient and prescient weapon I beg leave to add from memory the following legend, for which I cannot produce any better authority. A young nobleman of high hopes and fortune chanced to lose his way in the town which he inhabited, — the capital, if I mistake not, of a German province. He had accidentally involved himself among the narrow and winding streets of a suburb, inhabited by the lowest order of the people, and an approaching thunder-shower determined him to ask a short refuge in the most decent habitation that was near him. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a tall man, of a grisly and ferocious aspect and sordid dress. The stranger was readily ushered to a chamber, where swords, scourges, and machines which seemed to be implements of torture were suspended on the wall. One of these swords dropped from its scabbard as the nobleman, after a moment's hesitation, crossed the threshold. His host immediately stared at him with such a marked expression that the young man could not help demanding his name and business and the meaning of his looking at him so fixedly. 'I am,' answered the man, 'the public executioner of this city; and the incident you have observed is a sure augury that I shall, in discharge of my duty, one day cut off your head with the weapon which has just now spontaneously unsheathed itself.' The nobleman lost no time in leaving his place of refuge, but, engaging in some of the plots of the period, was shortly after decapitated by that very man and instrument.

Lord Lovat is said, by the author of the *Letters from Scotland*, to have affirmed that a number of swords that hung up in the hall of the mansion-house leaped of themselves out of the scabbard at the instant he was born. The story passed current among his clan, but, like that of the story I have just quoted, proved an unfortunate omen. (*Letters from Scotland*, II, 214.)

NOTE 21, p. 56

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well composed pibroch the imitative sounds of march, conflict,

flight, pursuit, and all the 'current of a heady fight.' To this opinion Dr. Beattie has given his suffrage in the following elegant passage: —

'A pibroch is a species of tune, peculiar, I think, to the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. It is performed on a bagpipe, and differs totally from all other music. Its rhythm is so irregular, and its notes, especially in the quick movement, so mixed and huddled together, that a stranger finds it impossible to reconcile his ear to it, so as to perceive its modulation. Some of these pibrochs, being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion, resembling a march; then gradually quicken into the onset; run off with noisy confusion, and turbulent rapidity, to imitate the conflict and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession.' (*Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition*, chap. III, note.)

NOTE 22, p. 58

Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Thus the Duke of Argyle is called MacCallum More, or the son of Colin the Great. Sometimes, however, it is derived from armorial distinctions, or the memory of some great feat; thus Lord Seaforth, as chief of the Mackenzies, or Clan-Kennet, bears the epithet of Caberfae, or Buck's Head, as representative of Colin Fitzgerald, founder of the family, who saved the Scottish king when endangered by a stag. But besides this title which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as

dhu or *roy;* sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more;* at other times, from some peculiar exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies, 'Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.'

The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat songs, of the Highlanders, which were usually composed in honour of a favourite chief. They are so adapted as to keep time with the sweep of the oars, and it is easy to distinguish between those intended to be sung to the oars of a galley, where the stroke is lengthened and doubled, as it were, and those which were timed to the rowers of an ordinary boat.

Note 23, p. 59

The Lennox, as the district is called which encircles the lower extremity of Loch Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake and the neighbouring district of Loch Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity, of which the noted conflict of Glen-fruin is a celebrated instance. This was a clan battle in which the Macgregors, headed by Allaster Macgregor, chief of the clan, encountered the sept of Colquhouns, commanded by Sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss. It is on all hands allowed that the action was desperately fought and that the Colquhouns were defeated with slaughter, leaving two hundred of their name dead upon the field. But popular tradition has added other horrors to the tale. It is said that Sir Humphry Colquhoun, who was on horseback, escaped to the castle of Benechra, or Banochar, and was next day dragged out and murdered by the victorious Macgregors in cold blood. Buchanan of Auchmar, however, speaks of his slaughter as a subsequent event, and as perpetrated by the Macfarlanes. Again, it is reported that the Macgregors murdered a number of youths whom report of the intended battle had brought to be spectators, and whom the Colquhouns, anxious for their safety, had shut up in a barn to be out of dan-

ger. One account of the Macgregors denies this circumstance entirely; another ascribes it to the savage and bloodthirsty disposition of a single individual, the bastard brother of the Laird of Macgregor, who amused himself with this second massacre of the innocents in express disobedience to the chief, by whom he was left their guardian during the pursuit of the Colquhouns. It is added that Macgregor bitterly lamented this atrocious action, and prophesied the ruin which it must bring upon their ancient clan. The following account of the conflict, which is indeed drawn up by a friend of the Clan Gregor, is altogether silent on the murder of the youths.

'In the spring of the year 1602, there happened great dissensions and troubles between the laird of Luss, chief of the Colquhouns, and Alexander, laird of Macgregor. The original of these quarrels proceeded from injuries and provocations mutually given and received, not long before. Macgregor, however, wanting to have them ended in friendly conferences, marched at the head of two hundred of his clan to Leven, which borders on Luss, his country, with a view of settling matters by the mediation of friends: but Luss had no such intentions, and projected his measures with a different view; for he privately drew together a body of 300 horse and 500 foot, composed partly of his own clan and their followers, and partly of the Buchanans, his neighbours, and resolved to cut off Macgregor and his party to a man, in case the issue of the conference did not answer his inclination. But matters fell otherwise than he expected; and though Macgregor had previous information of his insidious design, yet, dissembling his resentment, he kept the appointment, and parted good friends in appearance.

'No sooner was he gone, than Luss, thinking to surprise him and his party in full security, and without any dread or apprehension of his treachery, followed with all speed, and came up with him at a place called Glenfroon. Macgregor, upon the alarm, divided his men into two parties, the greatest part whereof he commanded himself, and the other he committed to the care of his brother John, who, by his orders, led them

about another way, and attacked the Colquhouns in flank. Here it was fought with great bravery on both sides for a considerable time; and, notwithstanding the vast disproportion of numbers, Macgregor, in the end, obtained an absolute victory. So great was the rout, that 200 of the Colquhouns were left dead upon the spot, most of the leading men were killed, and a multitude of prisoners taken. But what seemed most surprising and incredible in this defeat, was, that none of the Macgregors were missing, except John, the laird's brother, and one common fellow, though indeed many of them were wounded.' (Professor Ross's *History of the Family of Sutherland*, 1631.)

The consequences of the battle of Glen-fruin were very calamitous to the family of Macgregor, who had already been considered as an unruly clan. The widows of the slain Colquhouns, sixty, it is said, in number, appeared in doleful procession before the king at Stirling, each riding upon a white palfrey, and bearing in her hand the bloody shirt of her husband displayed upon a pike. James VI was so much moved by the complaints of this 'choir of mourning dames,' that he let loose his vengeance against the Macgregors, without either bounds or moderation. The very name of the clan was proscribed, and those by whom it had been borne were given up to sword and fire and absolutely hunted down by bloodhounds like wild beasts. Argyle and the Campbells, on the one hand, Montrose, with the Grahames and Buchanans, on the other, are said to have been the chief instruments in suppressing this devoted clan. The Laird of Macgregor surrendered to the former on condition that he would take him out of Scottish ground. But, to use Birrel's expression, he kept 'a Highlandman's promise;' and although he fulfilled his word to the letter by carrying him as far as Berwick, he afterwards brought him back to Edinburgh, where he was executed with eighteen of his clan. (Birrel's *Diary*, October 2, 1603.) The Clan Gregor, being thus driven to utter despair, seem to have renounced the laws from the benefit of which they were excluded, and their depredations produced new acts of council, confirming the severity of their proscription, which had only the effect of

rendering them still more united and desperate. It is a most extraordinary proof of the ardent and invincible spirit of clanship, that notwithstanding the repeated proscriptions providently ordained by the legislature 'for the *timeous preventing* the disorders and oppression that may fall out by the said name and clan of Macgregors, and their followers,' they were in 1715 and 1745 a potent clan, and continue to subsist as a distinct and numerous race.

Note 24, p. 66

In 1529 James V made a convention at Edinburgh, for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances. Accordingly he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, consisting of his principal nobility and their followers, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the intervals of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick Forest, where he hanged, over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of King of the Border. But the most noted victim of justice during that expedition was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, famous in Scottish song, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the king, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot. The effect of this severity was such that, as the vulgar expressed it, 'the rush-bush kept the cow,' and, 'thereafter was great peace and rest a long time, wherethrough the King had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick Forest in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the King as good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife.' (Pitscottie's *History*, p. 153.)

NOTE 25, p. 67

James was, in fact, equally attentive to restrain rapine and feudal oppression in every part of his dominions.

'The king past to the Isles, and there held justice courts, and punished both thief and traitor according to their demerit. And also he caused great men to show their holdings, wherethrough he found many of the said lands in non-entry; the which he confiscate and brought home to his own use, and afterward annexed them to the crown, as ye shall hear. Syne brought many of the great men of the isles captive with him, such as Mudyart, M'Connel, M'Loyd of the Lewes, M'Neil, M'Lane, M'Intosh, John Mudyart, M'Kay, M'Kenzie, with many other that I cannot rehearse at this time. Some of them he put in ward and some in court, and some he took pledges for good rule in time coming. So he brought the isles both north and south, in good rule, and peace; wherefore he had great profit, service, and obedience of people a long time thereafter; and as long as he had the heads of the country in subjection, they lived in great peace and rest, and there was great riches and policy by the king's justice.' (Pitscottie, p. 152.)

NOTE 26, p. 73

The author has to apologise for the inadvertent appropriation of a whole line from the tragedy of Douglas, —

I hold the first who strikes, my foe.

(Note to the Second Edition.)

NOTE 27, p. 74

Hardihood was in every respect so essential to the character of a Highlander that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter which could be thrown upon him. Yet it was sometimes hazarded on what we might presume to think slight grounds. It is reported of old Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, when upwards

of seventy, that he was surprised by night on a hunting or military expedition. He wrapped him in his plaid and lay contentedly down upon the snow, with which the ground happened to be covered. Among his attendants, who were preparing to take their rest in the same manner, he observed that one of his grandsons, for his better accommodation, had rolled a large snow-ball, and placed it below his head. The wrath of the ancient chief was awakened by a symptom of what he conceived to be degenerate luxury. 'Out upon thee,' said he, kicking the frozen bolster from the head which it supported, 'art thou so effeminate as to need a pillow?' The officer of engineers, whose curious letters from the Highlands have been more than once quoted, tells a similar story of Macdonald of Keppoch, and subjoins the following remarks: —

'This and many other stories are romantick; but there is one thing, that at first thought might seem very romantick, of which I have been credibly assured, that when the Highlanders are constrained to lie among the hills, in cold dry windy weather, they sometimes soak the plaid in some river or burn, (i.e., brook,) and then, holding up a corner of it a little above their heads, they turn themselves round and round, till they are enveloped by the whole mantle. They then lay themselves down on the heath, upon the leeward side of some hill, where the wet and the warmth of their bodies make a steam, like that of a boiling kettle. The wet, they say, keeps them warm by thickening the stuff, and keeping the wind from penetrating. I must confess I should have been apt to question this fact, had I not frequently seen them wet from morning to night, and, even at the beginning of the rain, not so much as stir a few yards to shelter, but continue in it without necessity, till they were, as we say, wet through and through. And that is soon effected by the looseness and spunginess of the plaiding; but the bonnet is frequently taken off, and wrung like a dish-clout, and then put on again. They have been accustomed from their infancy to be often wet, and to take the water like spaniels, and this is become a second nature, and can scarcely be called a hardship to them, insomuch

that I used to say, they seemed to be of the duck kind, and to love water as well. Though I never saw this preparation for sleep in windy weather, yet, setting out early in a morning from one of the huts, I have seen the marks of their lodging, where the ground has been free from rime or snow, which remained all round the spot where they had lain.' (*Letters from Scotland*, London, 1754, 8vo, II, 108.)

NOTE 28, p. 74

'This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron. An English officer being in company with a certain chieftain, and several other Highland gentlemen, near Killichumen, had an argument with the *great man;* and both being well warmed with usky, at last the dispute grew very hot. A youth who was henchman, not understanding one word of English, imagined his chief was insulted, and thereupon drew his pistol from his side, and snapped it at the officer's head: but the pistol missed fire, otherwise it is more than probable he might have suffered death from the hand of that little vermin. But it is very disagreeable to an Englishman over a bottle, with the Highlanders, to see every one of them have his gilly, that is, his servant, standing behind him all the while, let what will be the subject of conversation.' (*Letters from Scotland*, II, 159.)

NOTE 29, p. 78

When a chieftain designed to summon his clan upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the Fiery Cross, also Crean Tarigh, or the Cross of Shame, because disobedience to what the symbol implied inferred infamy. It

was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward with equal despatch to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross every man from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair in his best arms and accoutrements to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745–46 the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. The late Alexander Stewart, Esq., of Invernahyle described to me his having sent round the Fiery Cross through the district of Appine during the same commotion. The coast was threatened by a descent from two English frigates, and the flower of the young men were with the army of Prince Charles Edward, then in England; yet the summons was so effectual that even old age and childhood obeyed it; and a force was collected in a few hours, so numerous and so enthusiastic that all attempt at the intended diversion upon the country of the absent warriors was in prudence abandoned as desperate.

This practice, like some others, is common to the Highlanders with the ancient Scandinavians, as will appear by the following extract from Olaus Magnus: —

'When the enemy is upon the sea-coast, or within the limits of northern kingdomes, then presently, by the command of the principal governours, with the counsel and consent of the old soldiers, who are notably skilled in such like business, a staff of three hands length, in the common sight of them all, is carried, by the speedy running of some active young man, unto that

village or city, with this command, — that on the 3. 4. or 8. day, one, two, or three, or else every man in particular, from 15 years old, shall come with his arms, and expenses for ten or twenty days, upon pain that his or their houses shall be burnt, (which is intimated by the burning of the staff,) or else the master to be hanged, (which is signified by the cord tied to it,) to appear speedily on such a bank, or field, or valley, to hear the cause he is called, and to hear orders from the said provincial governours what he shall do. Wherefore that messenger, swifter than any post or waggon, having done his commission, comes slowly back again, bringing a token with him that he hath done all legally; and every moment one or another runs to every village, and tells those places what they must do. . . . The messengers, therefore, of the footmen, that are to give warning to the people to meet for the battail, run fiercely and swiftly; for no snow, no rain, nor heat can stop them, nor night hold them; but they will soon run the race they undertake. The first messenger tells it to the next village, and that to the next; and so the hubbub runs all over till they all know it in that stift or territory, where, when, and wherefore they must meet.' (Olaus Magnus's *History of the Goths*, Englished by J. S., London, 1658, book IV, chaps. 3, 4.)

NOTE 30, p. 81

The state of religion in the Middle Ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain, Friar Tuck. And that same curtal friar was probably matched in manners and appearance by the ghostly fathers of the Tynedale robbers, who are thus described in an excommunication fulminated against their patrons by Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham, tempore Henrici VIII.

'We have further understood, that there are many chaplains

in the said territories of Tynedale and Redesdale, who are public and open maintainers of concubinage, irregular, suspended, excommunicated, and interdicted persons, and withal so utterly ignorant of letters, that it has been found by those who objected this to them, that there were some who, having celebrated mass for ten years, were still unable to read the sacramental service. We have also understood there are persons among them who, although not ordained, do take upon them the offices of priesthood; and, in contempt of God, celebrate the divine and sacred rites, and administer the sacraments, not only in sacred and dedicated places, but in those which are prophane and interdicted, and most wretchedly ruinous; they themselves being attired in ragged, torn, and most filthy vestments, altogether unfit to be used in divine, or even in temporal offices. The which said chaplains do administer sacraments and sacramental rites to the aforesaid manifest and infamous thieves, robbers, depredators, receivers of stolen goods, and plunderers, and that without restitution, or intention to restore, as evinced by the act; and do also openly admit them to the rites of ecclesiastical sepulchre, without exacting security for restitution, although they are prohibited from doing so by the sacred canons, as well as by the institutes of the saints and fathers. All which infers the heavy peril of their own souls, and is a pernicious example to the other believers in Christ, as well as no slight, but an aggravated injury, to the numbers despoiled and plundered of their goods, gear, herds, and chattels.' [1]

To this lively and picturesque description of the confessors and churchmen of predatory tribes there may be added some curious particulars respecting the priests attached to the several septs of native Irish during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. These friars had indeed to plead that the incursions, which they not only pardoned but even encouraged, were made upon those hostile to them, as well in religion as from national antipathy; but by Protestant writers they are uniformly alleged to be the

[1] *The Monition against the Robbers of Tynedale and Redesdale*, with which I was favoured by my friend Mr. Surtees, of Mainsforth, may be found in the original Latin in the Appendix to the Introduction to the *Border Minstrelsy*.

chief instruments of Irish insurrection, the very well-spring of all rebellion towards the English government. Lithgow, the Scottish traveller, declares the Irish wood-kerne, or predatory tribes, to be but the hounds of their hunting priests, who directed their incursions by their pleasure, partly for sustenance, partly to gratify animosity, partly to foment general division, and always for the better security and easier domination of the friars.[1] Derrick, the liveliness and minuteness of whose descriptions may frequently apologise for his doggerel verses, after describing an Irish feast and the encouragement given, by the songs of the bards, to its termination in an incursion upon the parts of the country more immediately under the dominion of the English, records the no less powerful arguments used by the friar to excite their animosity: —

And more t'augment the flame,
and rancour of their harte,
The frier, of his counsells vile,
to rebelles doth imparte,
Affirming that it is
an almose deede to God,
To make the English subjectes taste
the Irish rebells' rodde.
To spoile, to kill, to burne,
this frier's counsell is;
And for the doing of the same,
he warrantes heavenlie blisse.
He tells a holie tale;
the white he tournes to blacke;
And through the pardons in his male,
he workes a knavishe knacke.

The wreckful invasion of a part of the English pale is then described with some spirit; the burning of houses, driving off cattle, and all pertaining to such predatory inroads, are illustrated by a rude cut. The defeat of the Irish by a party of English soldiers from the next garrison is then commemorated, and in like manner adorned with an engraving, in which the friar is exhibited mourning over the slain chieftain; or, as the rubric expresses it,

The frier then, that treacherous knave, with ough ough-hone lament,
To see his cousin Devill's-son to have so foul event.

[1] Lithgow's *Travels*, first ed., p. 431.

The matter is handled at great length in the text, of which the following verses are more than sufficient sample: —

The frier seyng this,
lamentes that luckless parte,
And curseth to the pitte of hell
the death man's sturdie harte:
Yet for to quight them with
the frier taketh paine,
For all the synnes that ere he did
remission to obtaine.
And therefore serves his booke,
the candell and the bell;
But thinke you that such apishe toies
bring damned souls from hell?
It 'longs not to my parte
infernall things to knowe;
But I beleve till later daie,
thei rise not from belowe.
Yet hope that friers give
to this rebellious rout,
If that their souls should chaunce in hell,
to bringe them quicklie out,
Doeth make them lead suche lives,
as neither God nor man,
Without revenge for their desartes,
permitte or suffer can.
Thus friers are the cause,
the fountain, and the spring,
Of hurleburles in this lande,
of eche unhappie thing.
Thei cause them to rebell
against their soveraigne quene,
And through rebellion often tymes,
their lives doe vanishe clene.
So as by friers meanes,
in whom all follie swimme,
The Irishe karne doe often lose
the life, with hedde and limme.[1]

As the Irish tribes and those of the Scottish Highlands are much more intimately allied by language, manners, dress, and customs than the antiquaries of either country have been willing to admit, I flatter myself I have here produced a strong warrant for the character sketched in the text. The following picture, though of a different kind, serves to establish the existence of

[1] This curious picture of Ireland was inserted by the author in the republication of Somers's *Tracts*, I, in which the plates have been also inserted, from the only impressions known to exist, belonging to the copy in the Advocates' Library. See Somers's *Tracts*, I, pp. 591, 594.

ascetic religionists to a comparatively late period in the Highlands and Western Isles. There is a great deal of simplicity in the description, for which, as for much similar information, I am obliged to Dr. John Martin, who visited the Hebrides at the suggestion of Sir Robert Sibbald, a Scottish antiquarian of eminence, and early in the eighteenth century published a description of them which procured him admission into the Royal Society. He died in London about 1719. His work is a strange mixture of learning, observation, and gross credulity.

'I remember,' says this author, 'I have seen an old lay-capuchin here, (in the island of Benbecula,) called in their language Brahir-bocht, that is, Poor Brother; which is literally true; for he answers this character, having nothing but what is given him: he holds himself fully satisfied with food and rayment, and lives in as great simplicity as any of his order; his diet is very mean, and he drinks only fair water; his habit is no less mortifying than that of his brethren elsewhere: he wears a short coat, which comes no farther than his middle, with narrow sleeves like a waistcoat: he wears a plad above it, girt about the middle, which reaches to his knee: the plad is fastened on his breast with a wooden pin, his neck bare, and his feet often so too; he wears a hat for ornament, and the string about it is a bit of a fisher's line, made of horse-hair. This plad he wears instead of a gown worn by those of his order in other countries. I told him he wanted the flaxen girdle that men of his order usually wear: he answered me, that he wore a leathern one, which was the same thing. Upon the matter, if he is spoke to when at meat, he answers again; which is contrary to the custom of his order. This poor man frequently diverts himself with angling of trouts; he lies upon straw, and has no bell (as others have) to call him to his devotions, but only his conscience, as he told me.' (Martin's *Description of the Western Highlands*, p. 82.)

NOTE 31, p. 81

The legend which follows is not of the author's invention. It is possible he may differ from modern critics in supposing that

the records of human superstition, if peculiar to and characteristic of the country in which the scene is laid, are a legitimate subject of poetry. He gives, however, a ready assent to the narrower proposition which condemns all attempts of an irregular and disordered fancy to excite terror by accumulating a train of fantastic and incoherent horrors, whether borrowed from all countries and patched upon a narrative belonging to one which knew them not or derived from the author's own imagination. In the present case, therefore, I appeal to the record which I have transcribed, with the variation of a very few words, from the geographical collections made by the Laird of Macfarlane. I know not whether it be necessary to remark that the miscellaneous concourse of youths and maidens on the night and on the spot where the miracle is said to have taken place, might, even in a credulous age, have somewhat diminished the wonder which accompanied the conception of Gilli-Doir-Magrevollich.

'There is bot two myles from Inverloghie, the church of Kilmalee, in Loghyeld. In ancient tymes there was ane church builded upon ane hill, which was above this church, which doeth now stand in this toune; and ancient men doeth say, that there was a battell foughten on ane litle hill not the tenth part of a myle from this church, be certaine men which they did not know what they were. And long tyme thereafter, certaine herds of that toune, and of the next toune, called Unnatt, both wenches and youthes, did on a tyme conveen with others on that hill; and the day being somewhat cold, did gather the bones of the dead men that were slayne long tyme before in that place, and did make a fire to warm them. At last they did all remove from the fire, except one maid or wench, which was verie cold, and she did remaine there for a space. She being quyetlie her alone, without anie other companie, took up her cloaths above her knees, or thereby, to warm her; a wind did come and caste the ashes upon her, and she was conceived of ane man-chyld. Severall tymes thereafter she was verie sick, and at last she was knowne to be with chyld. And then her parents did ask at her the matter heiroff, which the wench could not weel answer

which way to satisfie them. At last she resolved them with ane answer. As fortune fell upon her concerning this marvellous miracle, the chyld being borne, his name was called Gili-doir Maghrevollich, that is to say, the Black Child, Son to the Bones. So called, his grandfather sent him to schooll, and so he was a good schollar, and godlie. He did build this church which doeth now stand in Lochyeld, called Kilmalie.' (Macfarlane, *ut supra*, II, 188.)

NOTE 32, p. 82

The snood or riband with which a Scottish lass braided her hair had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch*, *toy*, or coif when she passed by marriage into the matron state. But if the damsel was so unfortunate as to lose pretensions to the name of maiden without gaining a right to that of matron, she was neither permitted to use the snood nor advanced to the graver dignity of the curch. In old Scottish songs there occur many sly allusions to such misfortune, as in the old words to the popular tune of 'Ower the muir amang the heather.'

Down amang the broom, the broom,
Down amang the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost her silken snood,
That gard her greet till she was wearie.

NOTE 33, p. 84

In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the Founder of the Church of Kilmalie the author has endeavoured to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce in a barbarous age on the person to whom it related. It seems likely that he must have become a fanatic or an impostor, or that mixture of both which forms a more frequent character than either of them, as existing separately. In truth, mad persons are frequently more anxious to impress upon others a faith in their visions than they are themselves confirmed in their reality; as, on the other hand, it is difficult for the most cool-headed impostor long to personate an enthusiast without in some degree believing what

he is so eager to have believed. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always imbued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The River Demon, or River-horse, — for it is that form which he commonly assumes, — is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession, with all its attendants. The 'noontide hag,' called in Gaelic Glas-lich, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin dressed in antique armour, and having one hand covered with blood, called from that circumstance Lham-dearg, or Red-hand, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemurcus. Other spirits of the desert, all frightful in shape and malignant in disposition, are believed to frequent different mountains and glens of the Highlands, where any unusual appearance produced by mist, or the strange lights that are sometimes thrown upon particular objects, never fails to present an apparition to the imagination of the solitary and melancholy mountaineer.

Note 34, p. 85

Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or, rather, a domestic spirit attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated by its wailings any approaching disaster. That of Grant of Grant was called May Moullach, and appeared in the form of a girl who had her arm covered with hair. Grant of Rothiemurcus had an attendant called Bodach-an-dun, or the Ghost of the Hill; and many other examples might be mentioned. The Ban-Schie implies a female fairy whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the

death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman with a blue mantle and streaming hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

The death of the head of a Highland family is also sometimes supposed to be announced by a chain of lights of different colours, called Dr'eug, or death of the Druid. The direction which it takes marks the place of the funeral.

NOTE 35, p. 85

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye as well as the ear may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena with which history abounds. Such an apparition is said to have been witnessed upon the side of Southfell mountain, between Penrith and Keswick, upon June 23, 1744, by two persons, William Lancaster of Blakehills and Daniel Stricket his servant, whose attestation to the fact, with a full account of the apparition, dated July 21, 1745, is printed in Clarke's *Survey of the Lakes*. The apparition consisted of several troops of horse moving in regular order with a steady, rapid motion, making a curved sweep around the fell, and seeming to the spectators to disappear over the ridge of the mountain. Many persons witnessed this phenomenon, and observed the last, or last but one, of the supposed troop occasionally leave his rank and pass at a gallop to the front, when he resumed the same steady pace. This curious appearance, making the necessary allowance for imagination, may be perhaps sufficiently accounted for by optical deception. (*Survey of the Lakes*, p. 25.)

Supernatural intimations of approaching fate are not, I

believe, confined to Highland families. Howel mentions having seen at a lapidary's, in 1632, a monumental stone prepared for four persons of the name of Oxenham, before the death of each of whom the inscription stated a white bird to have appeared and fluttered around the bed, while the patient was in the last agony. (*Familiar Letters*, ed. 1726, p. 247.) Glanville mentions one family the members of which received this solemn sign by music, the sound of which floated from the family residence and seemed to die in a neighbouring wood; another, that of Captain Wood of Bampton, to whom the signal was given by knocking. But the most remarkable instance of the kind occurs in the MS. Memoirs of Lady Fanshaw, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, Sir Richard, and she chanced during their abode in Ireland to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in his ancient baronial castle, surrounded with a moat. At midnight she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed, beheld by the moonlight, a female face and part of the form hovering at the window. The distance from the ground as well as the circumstance of the moat excluded the possibility that what she beheld was of this world. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, but pale; and the hair, which was reddish, was loose and dishevelled. The dress, which Lady Fanshaw's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself for some time, and then vanished with two shrieks, similar to that which had first excited Lady Fanshaw's attention. In the morning, with infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared not only to credit but to account for the apparition. 'A near relation of my family,' said he, 'expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain expectation of the event from you lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was due you. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female spectre whom you have seen always is visible. She is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by

marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle moat.'

Note 36, p. 85

Inch-Cailliach, the Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain. The burial-ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighbouring clans. The monuments of the Lairds of Macgregor, and of other families claiming a descent from the old Scottish King Alpine, are most remarkable. The Highlanders are as zealous of their rights of sepulture, as may be expected from a people whose whole laws and government, if clanship can be called so, turned upon the single principle of family descent. 'May his ashes be scattered on the water,' was one of the deepest and most solemn imprecations which they used against an enemy.

Note 37, p. 90

The present brogue of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod is a matter altogether out of question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards; a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of 'Red-shanks.' The process is very accurately described by one Elder (himself a Highlander) in the project for a union between England and Scotland addressed to Henry VIII. 'We go a-hunting, and after that we have slain red-deer, we flay off the skin by-and-by, and setting of our bare-foot on the inside thereof, for want of cunning shoemakers, by your grace's pardon, we play the cobblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof as shall reach up to our ankles, pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water may repass where it enters, and stretching it up with a strong

thong of the same above our said ankles. So, and please your noble grace, we make our shoes. Therefore, we using such manner of shoes, the rough hairy side outwards, in your grace's dominions of England, we be called Roughfooted Scots.' (Pinkerton's *History*, II, 397.)

Note 38, p. 93

The coronach of the Highlanders, like the ululatus of the Romans, and the ululoo of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased and the loss the clan would sustain by his death. The following is a lamentation of this kind literally translated from the Gaelic, to some of the ideas of which the text stands indebted. The tune is so popular that it has since become the war-march or 'Gathering of the Clan.'

Coronach on Sir Lauchlan, Chief of Maclean

Which of all the Senachies
Can trace thy line from the root, up to Paradise,
But Macvuirih, the son of Fergus?
No sooner had thine ancient stately tree
Taken firm root in Albion,
Than one of thy forefathers fell at Harlaw. —
'T was then we lost a chief of deathless name.

'T is no base weed — no planted tree,
Nor a seedling of last Autumn;
Nor a sapling planted at Beltain;[1]
Wide, wide around were spread its lofty branches —
But the topmost bough is lowly laid!
Thou hast forsaken us before Sawaine.[2]

Thy dwelling is the winter house; —
Loud, sad, sad, and mighty is thy death-song!
Oh! courteous champion of Montrose!
Oh! stately warrior of the Celtic Isles!
Thou shalt buckle thy harness on no more!

The coronach has for some years past been superseded at funerals by the use of the bagpipe; and that also is, like many other Highland peculiarities, falling into disuse, unless in remote districts.

[1] Bell's fire, or Whitsunday. [2] Hallowe'en.

Note 39, p. 96

Inspection of the provincial map of Perthshire or any large map of Scotland will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which in exercise of my poetical privilege I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain, and which at the period of my romance was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine, — a clan the most unfortunate and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, nor least brave, of the tribes of the Gael.

Slioch non rioghridh duchaisach
Bha-shios an Dun-Staiobhinish
Aig an roubh crun na Halba othus
'Stag a cheil duchas fast ris.

The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. From thence it passes towards Callender, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of St. Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Ardmandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strathgartney.

Note 40, p. 101

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader that the heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. This simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be 'like fire to heather set.'

Note 41, p. 102

The deep and implicit respect paid by the Highland clansmen to their chief rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. One solemn mode of swearing was by kissing the dirk, imprecating upon themselves death by that, or a similar weapon, if they broke their vow. But for oaths in the usual form they are said to have had little respect. As for the reverence due to the chief, it may be guessed from the following odd example of a Highland point of honour: —

'The clan whereto the above-mentioned tribe belongs, is the only one I have heard of, which is without a chief; that is, being divided into families, under several chieftains, without any particular patriarch of the whole name. And this is a great reproach, as may appear from an affair that fell out at my table, in the Highlands, between one of that name and a Cameron. The provocation given by the latter was, "Name your chief." The return of it at once was, "You are a fool." They went out next morning, but having early notice of it, I sent a small party of soldiers after them, which, in all probability, prevented some barbarous mischief that might have ensued: for the chiefless Highlander, who is himself a petty chieftain, was going to the place appointed with a small-sword and pistol, whereas the Cameron (an old man) took with him only his broadsword, according to the agreement.

'When all was over, and I had, at least seemingly, reconciled them, I was told the words, of which I seemed to think but slightly, were, to one of the clan, the greatest of all provocations.' (*Letters from Scotland*, II, 221.)

Note 42, p. 103

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of

Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy Men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr. Alexander Campbell,[1] may have originally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the Urisk, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian Satyr. The Urisk seems not to have inherited, with the form, the petulance of the silvan deity of the classics: his occupation, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's Lubbar Fiend, or of the Scottish Brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance.

'The Urisks,' says Dr. Graham, 'were a sort of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the Brownies, could be gained over by kind attention to perform the drudgery of the farm, and it was believed that many of the families in the Highlands had one of the order attached to it. They were supposed to be dispersed over the Highlands, each in his own wild recess, but the solemn stated meetings of the order were regularly held in this Cave of Benvenue. This current superstition, no doubt, alludes to some circumstance in the ancient history of this country.' (*Scenery on the Southern Confines of Perthshire*, 1806, p. 19.) It must be owned that the coir or den does not, in its present state, meet our ideas of a subterraneous grotto or cave, being only a small and narrow cavity among huge fragments of rocks rudely piled together. But such a scene is liable to convulsions of nature which a Lowlander cannot estimate, and which may have choked up what was originally a cavern. At least the name and tradition warrant the author of a fictitious tale to assert its having been such at the remote period in which this scene is laid.

[1] *Journey from Edinburgh*, 1802, p. 109.

Note 43, p. 105

Bealach-nam-bo, or the Pass of Cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin, treated of in a former note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.

Note 44, p. 105

A Highland chief, being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his body-guards, called Luichttach, picked from his clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person. These, according to their deserts, were sure to share abundantly in the rude profusion of his hospitality. It is recorded, for example, by tradition that Allan MacLean, chief of that clan, happened upon a time to hear one of these favourite retainers observe to his comrade that their chief grew old. 'Whence do you infer that?' replied the other. 'When was it,' rejoined the first, 'that a soldier of Allan's was obliged, as I am now, not only to eat the flesh from the bone, but even to tear off the inner skin, or filament?' The hint was quite sufficient, and MacLean next morning, to relieve his followers from such dire necessity, undertook an inroad on the mainland, the ravage of which altogether effaced the memory of his former expeditions for the like purpose.

Our officer of engineers, so often quoted, has given us a distinct list of the domestic officers who, independent of Luichttach, or *gardes de corps*, belonged to the establishment of a Highland Chief. These are, 1. The Henchman. (See note, p. 369.) 2. The Bard. (See p. 353.) 3. Bladier, or spokesman. 4. Gillie-more, or sword-bearer, alluded to in the text. 5. Gillie-casflue, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. Gillie-comstraine, who leads the chief's horse. 7. Gillie-Trushanarinsh, the baggage man. 8. The piper. 9. The piper's gillie, or attendant,

who carries the bagpipe.[1] Although this appeared, naturally enough, very ridiculous to an English officer, who considered the master of such a retinue as no more than an English gentleman of £500 a year, yet in the circumstances of the chief, whose strength and importance consisted in the number and attachment of his followers, it was of the last consequence, in point of policy, to have in his gift subordinate offices which called immediately round his person those who were most devoted to him, and, being of value in their estimation, were also the means of rewarding them.

NOTE 45, p. 112

The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of enquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the Taghairm, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt the desolate recesses. In some of these Hebrides they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the seashore, which they approached with certain solemnities, and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds after they did so to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelar deity of the stone, and, as such, to be if possible punctually complied with. Martin has recorded the following curious modes of Highland augury, in which the Taghairm and its effects upon the person who was subjected to it may serve to illustrate the text.

'It was an ordinary thing among the over-curious to consult an invisible oracle, concerning the fate of families and battles, &c. This was performed three different ways: the first was by a

[1] *Letters from Scotland*, II, p. 15.

company of men, one of whom, being detached by lot, was afterwards carried to a river, which was the boundary between two villages; four of the company laid hold on him, and, having shut his eyes, they took him by the legs and arms, and then, tossing him to and again, struck his hips with force against the bank. One of them cried out, What is it you have got here? another answers, A log of birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an answer to our present demands: and in a few minutes after, a number of little creatures came from the sea, who answered the question, and disappeared suddenly. The man was then set at liberty, and they all returned home, to take their measures according to the prediction of their false prophets; but the poor deluded fools were abused, for their answer was still ambiguous. This was always practised in the night, and may literally be called the works of darkness.

'I had an account from the most intelligent and judicious men in the Isle of Skie, that about sixty-two years ago, the oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the parish of Kilmartin, on the east side, by a wicked and mischievous race of people, who are now extinguished, both root and branch.

'The second way of consulting the oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house, and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow's hide, which they folded about him; his whole body was covered with it, except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him, by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at the break of day, and then he communicated his news to them; which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable enquiries.

'There was a third way of consulting, which was a confirmation of the second above mentioned. The same company who put the man into the hide, took a live cat, and put him on a spit; one of the number was employed to turn the spit, and one of his

consorts enquired of him, What are you doing? he answered, I roast this cat, until his friends answer the question; which must be the same that was proposed by the man shut up in the hide. And afterwards, a very big cat[1] comes, attended by a number of lesser cats, desiring to relieve the cat turned upon the spit, and then answers the question. If this answer proved the same that was given to the man in the hide, then it was taken as a confirmation of the other, which, in this case, was believed infallible.

'Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-Vist, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him, it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide, as above mentioned; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them; the impression it made on him was such as could never go off, and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse, and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime: he declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis for any thing I know.' (*Description of the Western Isles*, p. 110. See also Pennant's *Scottish Tour*, II, 361.)

Note 46, p. 113

I know not if it be worth observing that this passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old Highland cern, or ceteran, as they were called. He used to narrate the merry doings of the good old time when he was follower of Rob Roy MacGregor. This leader on one occasion thought proper to make a descent upon the lower part of the Loch Lomond district, and summoned all the heritors and farmers to meet at the Kirk of Drymen, to pay him blackmail, i.e., tribute for forbearance and protection. As this invitation was supported by a band of thirty or forty stout fellows, only one gentleman (an ancestor, if I mistake not, of the present Mr. Grahame of Gartmore), ventured to decline

[1] The reader may have met with the story of the *King of the Cats*, in Lord Littleton's *Letters*. It is well known in the Highlands as a nursery tale.

compliance. Rob Roy instantly swept his land of all he could drive away, and among the spoil was a bull of the old Scottish wild breed, whose ferocity occasioned great plague to the ceterans. 'But ere we had reached the Row of Dennan,' said the old man, 'a child might have scratched his ears.'[1] The circumstance is a minute one, but it paints the times when the poor beeve was compelled

> To hoof it o'er as many weary miles,
> With goading pikemen hollowing at his heels,
> As e'er the bravest antler of the woods.
>
> *Ethwald.*

NOTE 47, p. 113

There is a rock so named in the Forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself by letting down a flagon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall.

NOTE 48, p. 114

Quartered. — Every thing belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, breaking, the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. 'There is a little gristle,' says Turberville, 'which is upon the spoone of the brisket, which we call the raven's bone; and I have seen in some places a raven so wont and accustomed to it, that she would never fail to croak and cry for it all the time you were in breaking up of the deer, and would not depart till she had it.' In the very ancient metrical romance of *Sir Tristrem* that peerless knight, who is said to have been the very deviser of all rules of chase, did not omit the ceremony: —

[1] This anecdote was, in former editions, inaccurately ascribed to Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle, called Ghlune Dhu, or Black-knee, a relation of Rob Roy, but, as I have been assured, not addicted to his predatory excesses. (Note to Third Edition.)

The rauen he yaue his yiftes
Sat on the fourched tre.

The raven might also challenge his rights by the Book of St. Albans; for thus says Dame Juliana Berners: —

Slitteth anon
The bely to the side, from the corbyn bone;
That is corbyn's fee, at the death he will be.

Jonson, in *The Sad Shepherd*, gives a more poetical account of the same ceremony.

Marian. He that undoes him,
Doth cleave the brisket bone, upon the spoon
Of which a little gristle grows — you call it —
Robin Hood. The raven's bone.
Marian. Now o'er head sat a raven
On a sere bough, a grown, great bird, and hoarse,
Who, all the while the deer was breaking up,
So croaked and cried for 't, as all the huntsmen,
Especially old Scathlock, thought it ominous.

NOTE 49, p. 115

Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion that on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

NOTE 50, p. 121

This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad which occurs in the *Kœmpe Viser*, a collection of heroic songs first published in 1591, and reprinted in 1695, inscribed by Anders Sofrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia Queen of Denmark. I have been favoured with a literal translation of the original by my learned friend Mr. Robert Jamieson, whose deep knowledge of Scandinavian antiquities will, I hope, one day be displayed in illustration of the history of Scottish Ballad and

Song, for which no man possesses more ample materials. The story will remind the readers of the *Border Minstrelsy* of the tale of Young Tamlane. But this is only a solitary and not very marked instance of coincidence, whereas several of the other ballads in the same collection find exact counterparts in the *Kæmpe Viser*. Which may have been the originals, will be a question for future antiquaries. Mr. Jamieson, to secure the power of literal translation, has adopted the old Scottish idiom, which approaches so near to that of the Danish as almost to give word for word, as well as line for line, and indeed in many verses the orthography alone is altered. As Wester Haf, mentioned in the first stanza of the ballad, means the West Sea, in opposition to the Baltic, or East Sea, Mr. Jamieson inclines to be of opinion that the scene of the disenchantment is laid in one of the Orkney or Hebride Islands. To each verse in the original is added a burden, having a kind of meaning of its own, but not applicable, — at least, not uniformly applicable, — to the sense of the stanza to which it is subjoined: this is very common both in Danish and Scottish song.

THE ELFIN GRAY

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 143, AND FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591

Der ligger en vold i Vester Haf,
Der agter en bondè at byggè:
Hand förer did baadè hög og hund,
Og agter der om vinteren at liggè.
(DE VILDE DIUR OG DIURENE UDI SKOFVEN.)

I

There liggs a wold in Wester Haf,
There a husbande means to bigg,
And thither he carries baith hawk and hound,
There meaning the winter to ligg.
(*The wild deer and daes i' the shaw out.*)

2

He taks wi' him baith hound and cock,
The langer he means to stay,
The wild deer in the shaws that are
May sairly rue the day.
(*The wild deer, etc.*)

3

He's hew'd the beech, and he's fell'd the aik,
Sae has he the poplar grey;
And grim in mood was the grewsome elf,
That be sae bald he may.

4

He hew'd him kipples, he hew'd him bawks,
Wi' mickle moil and haste;
Syne speer'd the Elf i' the knock that bade,
'Wha's hacking here sae fast?'

5

Syne up and spak the weiest Elf,
Crean'd as an immert sma:
'It's here is come a Christian man; —
I'll fley him or he ga.'

6

It's up syne started the firsten Elf,
And glowr'd about sae grim:
'It's we'll awa to the husbande's house,
And hald a court on him.

7

'Here hews he down baith skugg and shaw,
And works us skaith and scorn:
His huswife he sall gie to me; —
They's rue the day they were born!'

8

The Elfen a' i' the knock that were,
Gaed dancing in a string;
They nighed near the husband's house;
Sae lang their tails did hing.

9

The hound he yowls i' the yard,
The herd toots in his horn;
The earn scraichs, and the cock craws,
As the husbande had gi'en him his corn.[1]

10

The Elfen were five score and seven,
Sae laidly and sae grim;
And they the husbande's guests maun be,
To eat and drink wi' him.

11

The husbande, out o' Villenshaw,
At his winnock the Elves can see:
'Help me, now, Jesu, Mary's son;
Thir Elves they mint at me!'

12

In every nook a cross he coost,
In his chalmer maist ava;
The Elfen a' were fley'd thereat,
And flew to the wild-wood shaw.

[1] This singular quatrain stands thus in the original:—

Hunden hand giör i gaarden;
Hiorden tudè i sit horn;
Œrnen skriger, og hanen galer,
Som bonden hafdè gifvet sit korn.

13

And some flew east, and some flew west,
  And some to the norwart flew;
And some they flew to the deep dale down,
  There still they are, I trow.[1]

14

It was then the weiest Elf,
  In at the door braids he;
Agast was the husbande, for that Elf
  For cross nor sign wad flee.

15

The huswife she was a canny wife,
  She set the Elf at the board;
She set before him baith ale and meat,
  Wi' mony a well-waled word.

16

'Hear thou, Gudeman o' Villenshaw,
  What now I say to thee;
Wha bade thee bigg within our bounds,
  Without the leave o' me?

17

'But, an thou in our bounds will bigg,
  And bide, as well as may be,
Then thou thy dearest huswife maun
  To me for a lemman gie.'

[1] In the Danish:

Sommè flöyè oster, og sommè flöyè vester,
  Noglè flöyè nör paa;
Noglè flöyè ned i dybenè dalè,
  Jeg troer de erè der endnu.

18

Up spak the luckless husbande then,
As God the grace him gae:
'Eline she is to me sae dear,
Her thou may nae-gate hae.'

19

Till the Elf he answer'd as he couth:
'Lat but my huswife be,
And tak whate'er, o' gude or gear,
Is mine, awa wi' thee.'

20

'Then I'll thy Eline tak and thee,
Aneath my feet to tread;
And hide thy goud and white monie
Aneath my dwalling stead.'

21

The husbande and his household a'
In sary rede they join:
'Far better that she be now forfairn,
Nor that we a' should tyne.'

22

Up, will of rede, the husbande stood,
Wi' heart fu' sad and sair;
And he has gien his huswife Eline
Wi' the young Elfe to fare.

23

Then blyth grew he, and sprang about;
He took her in his arm:
The rud it left her comely cheek;
Her heart was clem'd wi' harm.

24

A waefu' woman then she was ane,
And the moody tears loot fa':
'God rew on me, unseely wife,
How hard a weird I fa'!

25

'My fay I plight to the fairest wight
That man on mold mat see; —
Maun I now mell wi' a laidly El,
His light lemman to be?'

26

He minted ance — he minted twice,
Wae wax'd her heart that syth:
Syne the laidliest fiend he grew that e'er
To mortal ee did kyth.

27

When he the thirden time can mint
To Mary's son she pray'd,
And the laidly Elf was clean awa,
And a fair knight in his stead.

28

This fell under a linden green,
That again his shape he found;
O' wae and care was the word nae mair,
A' were sae glad that stound.

29

'O dearest Eline, hear thou this,
And thou my wife sall be,
And a' the goud in merry England
Sae freely I 'll gi'e thee!

30

'Whan I was but a little wee bairn,
My mither died me fra;
My stepmither sent me awa fra her;
I turn'd till an Elfin Grey.

31

'To thy husband I a gift will gie,
Wi' mickle state and gear,
As mends for Eline his huswife; —
Thou 's be my heartis dear.' —

32

'Thou nobil knyght, we thank now God
That has freed us frae skaith;
Sae wed thou thee a maiden free,
And joy attend ye baith!

33

'Sin I to thee nae maik can be
My dochter may be thine;
And thy gud will right to fulfill,
Lat this be our propine.' —

34

'I thank thee, Eline, thou wise woman;
My praise thy worth sall ha'e;
And thy love gin I fail to win,
Thou here at hame sall stay.'

35

The husbande biggit now on his öe,
And nae ane wrought him wrang;
His dochter wore crown in Engeland,
And happy lived and lang.

36

Now Eline, the husbande's huswife, has
Cour'd a' her grief and harms;
She's mither to a noble queen
That sleeps in a kingis arms.

GLOSSARY

St.

1. *Wold*, a wood; woody fastness.
Husbande, from the Dan. *hos*, with, and *bonde*, a villain, or bondsman, who was a cultivator of the ground, and could not quit the estate to which he was attached without the permission of his lord. This is the sense of the word in the old Scottish records. In the Scottish '*Burghe Laws*,' translated from the *Reg. Majest.* (Auchinleck MS. in the Adv. Lib.) it is used indiscriminately with the Dan. and Swed. *bondè*.
Bigg, build.
Ligg, lie.
Daes, does.
2. *Shaw*, wood.
Sairly, sorely.
3. *Aik*, oak.
Grewsome, terrible.
Bald, bold.
4. *Kipples* (couples); beams joined at the top, for supporting a roof, in building.
Bawks, balks; cross beams.
Moil, laborious industry.
Speer'd, asked.
Knock, hillock.
5. *Weiest*, smallest.
Crean'd, shrunk, diminished; from the Gael. *crian*, very small.
Immert, emmet; ant.
Christian, used in the Danish ballads, etc., in contradistinction to *demoniac*, as it is in England, in contradistinction to *brute;* in which sense a person of the lower class in England would call a Jew or a Turk, a Christian.
Fley, frighten.
6. *Glowr'd*, stared.
Hald, hold.
7. *Skugg*, shade.
Skaith, harm.
8. *Nighed*, approached.
9. *Yowls*, howls.
Toots. — In the Dan. *tude* is applied both to the howling of a dog and the sound of a horn.
Scraichs, screams.

St.

10. *Laidly*, loathly; disgustingly ugly.
Grim, fierce.
11. *Winnock*, window.
Mint, aim at.
12. *Coost*, cast.
Chalmer, chamber.
Maist, most.
Ava, of all.
13. *Norwart*, northward.
Trow, believe.
14. *Braids*, strides quickly forward.
Wad, would.
15. *Canny*, adroit.
Mony, many.
Weel-waled, well-chosen.
17. *An*, if.
Bide, abide.
Lemman, mistress.
18. *Nae-gate*, nowise.
19. *Couth*, could; knew how to.
Lat be, let alone.
Gude, goods; property.
20. *Aneath*, beneath.
Dwalling-stead, dwelling-place.
21. *Sary*, sorrowful.
Rede, counsel; consultation.
Forfairn, forlorn; lost; gone.
Tyne (verb neut.), be lost; perish.
22. *Will of rede*, bewildered in thought; in the Danish original, *vildraadige;* Lat. *inops consilii;* Gr. ἀπορων. This expression is left among the *desiderata* in the Glossary to Ritson's *Romances*, and has never been explained. It is obsolete in the Danish as well as in English.
Fare, go.
23. *Rud*, red of the cheek.
Clem'd, in the Danish, *klemt* (which, in the north of England, is still in use, as the word 'starved' is with us); brought to a dying state. It is used by our old comedians.
Harm, grief; as in the original, and in the old Teutonic, English, and Scottish poetry.
24. *Waefu'*, wofui.
Moody, strongly and wilfully passionate.
Rew, take ruth; pity.
Unseely, unhappy; unblest.

St.

Weird, fate.

Fa' (Isl. Dan. and Swed.), take; get; acquire; procure; have for my lot. — This Gothic verb answers, in its direct and secondary significations, exactly to the Latin *capio;* and Allan Ramsay was right in his definition of it. It is quite a different word from *fa'*, an abbreviation of *'fall* or *befall;* and is the principal root in *fangen*, to *fang*, take, or lay hold of.

25. *Fay*, faith.

Mold, mould; earth.

Mat, mote; might.

Maun, must.

Mell, mix.

El, an elf. This term, in the Welsh, signifies 'what has in itself the power of motion; a moving principle; an intelligence; a spirit; an angel.' In the Hebrew, it bears the same import.

26. *Minted*, attempted; meant; showed a mind, or intention to. The original is, —

'Hand *mindte* hende først — og anden gang; —
Hun giordis i hiortet sa vee:
End blef hand den *ledste* deifvel
Mand kunde med öyen see.
Der hand vilde *minde* den tredie gang.' etc.

Syth, tide; time.

Kyth, appear.

28. *Stound*, hour; time; moment.

29. *Merry* (old Teut. *meré*), famous; renowned; answering, in its etymological meaning, exactly to the Latin *mactus*. Hence 'merrymen,' as the address of a chief to his followers; meaning, not men of mirth, but of renown. The term is found in its original sense in the Gael. *marâ*, and the Welsh *mawr*, great; and in the oldest Teut. Romances, *mar*, *mer*, and *mere* have sometimes the same signification.

31. *Mends*, amends; recompense.

33. *Maik*, match; peer; equal.

Propine, pledge; gift.

35. *öe*, an island of the second magnitude; an island of the first magnitude being called a land, and one of the third magnitude a holm.

36. *Cour'd*, recover'd.

THE GHAIST'S WARNING

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 721

By the permission of Mr. Jamieson, this ballad is added from the same curious Collection. It contains some passages of great pathos

Svend Dyring hand rider sig op under öè,
(Varè jeg selver ung)
Der fæstè hand sig saa ven en möè.
(Mig lyster udi lunden at ridè,) etc.

Child Dyring has ridden him up under öe,[1]
(And O gin I were young!)
There wedded he him sae fair[2] a may.
(I' the green wood it lists me to ride.)

[1] *Under öe.* — The original expression has been preserved here and elsewhere, because no other could be found to supply its place. There is just as much meaning in it in the translation as in the original; but it is a standard Danish ballad phrase; and as such, it is hoped, will be allowed to pass.

[2] *Fair.* — The Dan. and Swed. *ven*, *væn*, or *vennè*, and the Gael. *bân*, in the oblique cases *bhân* (*vân*), is the origin of the Scottish *bonny*, which has so much puzzled all the etymologists.

Thegither they lived for seven lang year,
(*And O, etc.*)
And they seven bairns hae gotten in fere.
(*I' the greenwood, etc.*)

Sae Death 's come there intill that stead,
And that winsome lily flower is dead.

That swain he has ridden him up under öe,
And syne he has married anither may.

He 's married a may, and he 's fessen her hame;
But she was a grim and a laidly dame.

When into the castell court drave she,
The seven bairns stood wi' the tear in their ee.

The bairns they stood wi' dule and doubt; —
She up wi' her foot, and she kick'd them out.

Nor ale nor mead to the bairnies she gave:
'But hunger and hate frae me ye's have.'

She took frae them the bowster blae,
And said, 'Ye sall ligg i' the bare strae!'

She took frae them the groff wax-light:
Says, 'Now ye sall ligg i' the mirk a' night!'

'T was lang i' the night, and the bairnies grat:
Their mither she under the mools heard that;

That heard the wife under the eard that lay:
'For sooth maun I to my bairnies gae!'

That wife can stand up at our Lord's knee,
And 'May I gang and my bairnies see?'

She prigged sae sair, and she prigged sae lang,
That he at the last ga'e her leave to gang.

'And thou sall come back when the cock does craw;
For thou nae langer sall bide awa.'

Wi' her banes sae stark a bowt she gae;
She's riven baith wa' and marble gray.[1]

Whan near to the dwalling she can gang,
The dogs they wow'd till the lift it rang.

Whan she came till the castell yett,
Her eldest dochter stood thereat.

'Why stand ye here, dear dochter mine?
How are sma brithers and sisters thine?' —

'For sooth ye're a woman baith fair and fine;
But ye are nae dear mither of mine.' —

'Och! how should I be fine or fair?
My cheek it is pale, and the ground's my lair.' —

'My mither was white, wi' cheek sae red;
But thou art wan, and liker ane dead.' —

'Och! how should I be white and red,
Sae lang as I've been cauld and dead?'

When she cam till the chalmer in,
Down the bairns' cheeks the tears did rin.

[1] The original of this and the following stanza is very fine.

Hun sköd op sinè modigè been,
Der revenedè muur og graa marmorsteen.
Der hun gik igennem den by.
De hundè de tudè saa höjt i sky.

She buskit the tane, and she brush'd it there;
She kem'd and plaited the tither's hair.

The thirden she doodl'd upon her knee,
And the fourthen she dichted sae cannilie.

She's ta'en the fifthen upon her lap,
And sweetly suckled it at her pap.

Till her eldest dochter syne said she,
'Ye bid Child Dyring come here to me.'

Whan he cam till the chalmer in,
Wi' angry mood she said to him:

'I left you routh o' ale and bread;
My bairnies quail for hunger and need.

'I left ahind me braw bowsters blae;
My bairnies are liggin i' the bare strae.

'I left ye sae mony a groff wax-light;
My bairnies ligg i' the mirk a' night.

'Gin aft I come back to visit thee,
Wae, dowy, and weary thy luck shall be.'

Up spak little Kirstin in bed that lay:
'To thy bairnies I'll do the best I may.'

Aye when they heard the dog nirr and bell,
Sae ga'e they the bairnies bread and ale.

Aye whan the dog did wow, in haste
They cross'd and sain'd themsells frae the ghaist.

Aye whan the little dog yowl'd, with fear
(*And O gin I were young!*)
They shook at the thought that the dead was near.
(*I' the greenwood it lists me to ride.*)
or,
(*Fair words sae mony a heart they cheer.*)

GLOSSARY

St.
1. *May*, maid.
Lists, pleases.
2. *Bairns*, children.
In fere, together.
3. *Stead*, place.
Winsome, engaging; giving joy (old Teut.).
4. *Syne*, then.
5. *Fessen*, fetched; brought.
6. *Drave*, drove.
7. *Dule*, sorrow.
Doubt, fear.
9. *Bowster*, bolster; cushion; bed.
Blae, blue.
Strae, straw.
10. *Groff*, great; large in girt.
Mirk, dark.
11. *Lang i' the night*, late.
Grat, wept.
Mools, mould; earth.
12. *Eard*, earth.
Gae, go.
14. *Prigged*, entreated earnestly and perseveringly.
Gang, go.
15. *Craw*, crow.
16. *Banes*, bones.
Stark, strong.

St.
16. *Bowt*, bolt; elastic spring, like that of a bolt or arrow from a bow.
Riven, split asunder.
Wa', wall.
17. *Wow'd*, howled.
Lift, sky, firmament; air.
18. *Yett*, gate.
19. *Sma*, small.
23. *Cauld*, cold.
24. *Till*, to.
Rin, run.
25. *Buskit*, dressed.
Kem'd, combed.
Tither, the other.
30. *Routh*, plenty.
Quail, are quelled; die.
Need, want.
31. *Ahind*, behind.
Braw, brave; fine.
33. *Dowy*, sorrowful.
35. *Nirr*, snarl.
Bell, bark.
36. *Sained*, blessed; literally, signed with the sign of the cross. Before the introduction of Christianity, Runes were used in saining, as a spell against the power of enchantment and evil genii.
Ghaist, ghost.

NOTE 51, p. 122

In a long dissertation upon the Fairy Superstitions, published in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the most valuable part of which was supplied by my learned and indefatigable friend, Dr. John Leyden, most of the circumstances are collected which can throw light upon the popular belief which even yet prevails respecting them in Scotland. Dr. Graham, author of an entertaining work upon the scenery of the Perthshire Highlands, already frequently quoted, has recorded, with great accuracy,

the peculiar tenets held by the Highlanders on this topic, in the vicinity of Loch Katrine. The learned author is inclined to deduce the whole mythology from the Druidical system, — an opinion to which there are many objections.

'The Daoine Shi', or Men of Peace of the Highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish, repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy, in their subterraneous recesses, a sort of shadowy happiness, — a tinsel grandeur; which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortality.

'They are believed to inhabit certain round grassy eminences, where they celebrate their nocturnal festivities by the light of the moon. About a mile beyond the source of the Forth, above Lochcon, there is a place called Coirshi'an, or the Cove of the Men of Peace, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their residence. In the neighbourhood, are to be seen many round conical eminences; particularly one, near the head of the lake, by the skirts of which many are still afraid to pass after sunset. It is believed, that if, on Hallow-eve, any person, alone, goes round one of these hills nine times, towards the left hand (*sinistrorsum*) a door shall open, by which he will be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race, have been entertained in their secret recesses. There they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets, and delicious wines. Their females surpass the daughters of men in beauty. The *seemingly* happy inhabitants pass their time in festivity, and in dancing to notes of the softest music. But unhappy is the mortal who joins in their joys, or ventures to partake of their dainties. By this indulgence, he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound down irrevocably to the condition of Shi'ich, or Man of Peace.

'A woman, as is reported in the Highland tradition, was conveyed, in days of yore, into the secret recesses of the Men of

Peace. There she was recognised by one who had formerly been an ordinary mortal, but who had, by some fatality, become associated with the Shi'ichs. This acquaintance, still retaining some portion of human benevolence, warned her of her danger, and counselled her, as she valued her liberty, to abstain from eating and drinking with them, for a certain space of time. She complied with the counsel of her friend; and when the period assigned was elapsed, she found herself again upon earth, restored to the society of mortals. It is added, that when she examined the viands which had been presented to her, and which had appeared so tempting to the eye, they were found, now that the enchantment was removed, to consist only of the refuse of the earth.' (*Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire*, pp. 107–111.)

NOTE 52, p. 123

It has been already observed that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests, peculiarly jealous of their rights of vert and venison, as appears from the cause of offence taken, in the original Danish ballad. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern Duergar or dwarfs; to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings. In the huge metrical record of German chivalry, entitled *Helden-Buch*, Sir Hildebrand, and the other heroes of whom it treats, are engaged in one of their most desperate adventures, from a rash violation of the rose-garden of an Elfin, or Dwarf, King.

There are yet traces of a belief in this worst and most malicious order of fairies, among the Border wilds. Dr. Leyden has introduced such a dwarf into his ballad entitled the *Cout of Keeldar*, and has not forgot his characteristic detestation of the chase.

> The third blast that young Keeldar blew,
> Stil stood the limber fern,
> And a wee man, of swarthy hue,
> Upstarted by a cairn.

His russet weeds were brown as heath,
That clothes the upland fell;
And the hair of his head was frizzly red
As the purple heather-bell.

An urchin, clad in prickles red,
Clung cow'ring to his arm;
The hounds they howl'd, and backward fled,
As struck by fairy charm.

'Why rises high the stag-hound's cry,
Where stag-hound ne'er should be?
Why wakes that horn the silent morn,
Without the leave of me?' —

'Brown dwarf, that o'er the muirland strays,
Thy name to Keeldar tell!' —
'The Brown Man of the Muirs, who stays
Beneath the heather-bell.

''T is sweet beneath the heather-bell
To live in autumn brown;
And sweet to hear the lav'rock's swell,
Far, far from tower and town.

'But woe betide the shrilling horn,
The chase's surly cheer!
And ever that hunter is forlorn,
Whom first at morn I hear.'

The poetical picture here given of the Duergar corresponds exactly with the following Northumbrian legend, with which I was lately favoured by my learned and kind friend, Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth, who has bestowed indefatigable labour upon the antiquities of the English Border counties. The subject is in itself so curious that the length of the note will, I hope, be pardoned.

'I have only one record to offer of the appearance of our Northumbrian Duergar. My narratrix is Elizabeth Cockburn, an old wife of Offerton, in this county, whose credit, in a case of this kind, will not, I hope, be much impeached, when I add, that she is, by her dull neighbours, supposed to be occasionally insane, but, by herself, to be at those times endowed with a faculty of seeing visions, and spectral appearances, which shun the common ken.

'In the year before the great rebellion, two young men from

Newcastle were sporting on the high moors above Elsdon, and after pursuing their game several hours, sat down to dine in a green glen, near one of the mountain streams. After their repast, the younger lad ran to the brook for water, and after stooping to drink, was surprised, on lifting his head again, by the appearance of a brown dwarf, who stood on a crag covered with brackens, across the burn. This extraordinary personage did not appear to be above half the stature of a common man, but was uncommonly stout and broad-built, having the appearance of vast strength. His dress was entirely brown, the colour of the brackens, and his head covered with frizzled red hair. His countenance was expressive of the most savage ferocity, and his eyes glared like a bull. It seems he addressed the young man first, threatening him with his vengeance, for having trespassed on his demesnes, and asking him if he knew in whose presence he stood? The youth replied, that he now supposed him to be the lord of the moors; that he offended through ignorance; and offered to bring him the game he had killed. The dwarf was a little mollified by this submission, but remarked, that nothing could be more offensive to him than such an offer, as he considered the wild animals as his subjects, and never failed to avenge their destruction. He condescended further to inform him, that he was, like himself, mortal, though of years far exceeding the lot of common humanity; and (what I should not have had an idea of) that he hoped for salvation. He never, he added, fed on any thing that had life, but lived, in the summer, on whortleberries, and in winter, on nuts and apples, of which he had great store in the woods. Finally, he invited his new acquaintance to accompany him home, and partake his hospitality; an offer which the youth was on the point of accepting, and was just going to spring across the brook, (which if he had done, says Elizabeth, the dwarf would certainly have torn him in pieces,) when his foot was arrested by the voice of his companion, who thought he had tarried long: and on looking round again, "the wee brown man was fled." The story adds, that he was imprudent enough to slight the admonition, and to sport over the

moors on his way homewards: but soon after his return, he fell into a lingering disorder, and died within the year.'

Note 53, p. 123

As the Daoine Shi', or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, green is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege as a reason that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy; but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name, that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once by observing that the whip-cord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour.

Note 54, p. 123

The Elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession: —

> For I ride on a milk-white steed,
> And aye nearest the town;
> Because I was a christen'd knight,
> They give me that renown.

I presume that in the Danish ballad of *The Elfin Gray* the obstinacy of the 'weiest Elf,' who would not flee for cross or sign, is to be derived from the circumstance of his having been 'christen'd man.'

How eager the Elves were to obtain for their offspring the

prerogatives of Christianity, will be proved by the following story: —

'In the district called Haga, in Iceland, dwelt a nobleman called Sigward Forster, who had an intrigue with one of the subterranean females. The elf became pregnant, and exacted from her lover a firm promise that he would procure the baptism of the infant. At the appointed time, the mother came to the churchyard, on the wall of which she placed a golden cup, and a stole for the priest, agreeable to the custom of making an offering at baptism. She then stood a little apart. When the priest left the church, he enquired the meaning of what he saw, and demanded of Sigward, if he avowed himself the father of the child. But Sigward, ashamed of the connexion, denied the paternity. He was then interrogated if he desired that the child should be baptised; but this also he answered in the negative, lest, by such request, he should admit himself to be the father. On which the child was left untouched and unbaptised. Whereupon the mother, in extreme wrath, snatched up the infant and the cup, and retired, leaving the priestly cope, of which fragments are still in preservation. But this female denounced and imposed upon Sigward, and his posterity, to the ninth generation, a singular disease, with which many of his descendants are afflicted at this day.' Thus wrote Einar Dudmond, pastor of the parish of Garpsdale, in Iceland, a man profoundly versed in learning, from whose manuscript it was extracted by the learned Torfæus. (*Historia Hrolfi Krakii*, Hafniæ, 1715, *prefatio*.)

Note 55, p. 125

No fact respecting Fairy-land seems to be better ascertained than the fantastic and illusory nature of their apparent pleasure and splendour. It has been already noticed in the former quotations from Dr. Graham's entertaining volume, and may be confirmed by the following Highland tradition: —

'A woman, whose new-born child had been conveyed by them

into their secret abodes, was also carried thither herself, to remain, however, only until she should suckle her infant. She, one day, during this period, observed the Shi'ichs busily employed in mixing various ingredients in a boiling cauldron; and, as soon as the composition was prepared, she remarked that they all carefully anointed their eyes with it, laying the remainder aside for future use. In a moment when they were all absent, she also attempted to anoint her eyes with the precious drug, but had time to apply it to one eye only, when the Daoine Shi' returned. But with that eye she was henceforth enabled to see every thing as it really passed in their secret abodes: — She saw every object, not as she hitherto had done, in deceptive splendour and elegance, but in its genuine colours and form. The gaudy ornaments of the apartment were reduced to the walls of a gloomy cavern. Soon after, having discharged her office, she was dismissed to her own home. Still, however, she retained the faculty of seeing, with her medicated eye, every thing that was done, any where in her presence, by the deceptive art of the order. One day, amidst a throng of people, she chanced to observe the Shi'ich, or man of peace, in whose possession she had left her child; though to every other eye invisible. Prompted by maternal affection, she inadvertently accosted him, and began to enquire after the welfare of her child. The man of peace, astonished at being thus recognised by one of mortal race, demanded how she had been enabled to discover him. Awed by the terrible frown of his countenance, she acknowledged what she had done. He spat in her eye, and extinguished it for ever.' (Graham's *Sketches*, pp. 116–118.)

It is very remarkable that this story, translated by Dr. Grahame from popular Gaelic tradition, is to be found in the *Otia Imperialia* of Gervase of Tilbury. A work of great interest might be compiled upon the origin of popular fiction, and the transmission of similar tales from age to age, and from country to country. The mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next century, and that into the nursery tale of the subsequent ages. Such an investigation,

while it went greatly to diminish our ideas of the richness of human invention, would also show that these fictions, however wild and childish, possess such charms for the populace as enable them to penetrate into countries unconnected by manners and language, and having no apparent intercourse to afford the means of transmission. It would carry me far beyond my bounds to produce instances of this community of fable, among nations who never borrowed from each other anything intrinsically worth learning. Indeed, the wide diffusion of popular fictions may be compared to the facility with which straws and feathers are dispersed abroad by the wind, while valuable metals cannot be transported without trouble and labour. There lives, I believe, only one gentleman, whose unlimited acquaintance with this subject might enable him to do it justice; I mean my friend Mr. Francis Douce, of the British Museum, whose usual kindness will, I hope, pardon my mentioning his name, while on a subject so closely connected with his extensive and curious researches.

Note 56, p. 125

The subjects of Fairy-land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of 'crimping' system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the 'Londe of Faery.' In the beautiful *Fairy Romance of Orfee and Heurodiis* (Orpheus and Eurydice), in the Auchinleck MS., is the following striking enumeration of persons thus abstracted from middle earth. Mr. Ritson unfortunately published this romance from a copy in which the following, and many other highly poetical passages, do not occur: —

> Then he gan biholde about al,
> And seighe ful liggeand with in the wal,
> Of folk that wer thidder y-brought,
> And thought dede and nere nought;
> Some stode with outen hadde;

And sum none armes nade;
And sum thurch the bodi hadde wounde;
And sum lay wode y-bounde;
And sum armed on hors sete;
And sum astrangled as thai ete;
And sum war in water adreynt;
And sum with fire al forschreynt;
Wives ther lay on childe bedde;
Sum dede, and sum awedde;
And wonder fele ther lay besides,
Right as thai slepe her undertides;
Eche was thus in the warld y-home,
With fairi thider y-come.

NOTE 57, p. 141

St. John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: 'It was true, we gave laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase: but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an authority.' (Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, Oxford, 1702, fol. vol., p. 183.)

NOTE 58, p. 142

The Scottish Highlanders in former times had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French, whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Charters, when a hostage in England during the reign of Edward VI, was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands (*au fin fond des Sauvages*). After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these Scottish savages devour a part of their venison raw, without any further preparation than compressing it between two batons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy;

and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular. This curious trait of manners was communicated by M. de Montmorency, a great friend of the Vidame, to Brantôme, by whom it is recorded in *Vies des Hommes Illustres, Discours*, lxxxix, art. 14. The process by which the raw venison was rendered eatable is described very minutely in the romance of Perceforest, where Estonne, a Scottish knight-errant, having slain a deer, says to his companion Claudius, —

'Sire, or mangerez vous et moy aussi. Voire si nous auions de feu, dit Claudius. Par l'ame de mon pere, dist Estonne, ie vous atourneray et cuiray a la maniere de nostre pays comme pour cheualier errant. Lors tira son espee, et sen vint a la branche dung arbre, et y fait vng grant trou, et puis fend la branche bien deux piedx, et boute la cuisse du cerf entredeux, et puis prent le licol de son cheval, et en lye la branche, et destraint si fort, que le sang et les humeurs de la chair saillent hors, et demeure la chair doulce et seiche. Lors prent la chair, et oste ius le cuir, et la chaire demeure aussi blanche comme si ce feust dung chappon. Dont dist a Claudius, Sire, ie la vous ay cuiste a la guise de mon pays, vous en pouez manger hardyement, car ie mangeray premier. Lors met sa main a sa selle en vng lieu quil y auoit, et tire hors sel et poudre de poiure et gingembre, mesle ensemble, et le iecte dessus, et le frote sus bien fort, puis le couppe a moytie, et en donne a Claudius l'une des pieces, et puis mort en l'autre aussi sauoureusement quil est aduis que il en feist la pouldre voller. Quant Claudius veit quil le mangeoit de tel goust, il en print grant faim, et commence a manger tresvoulentiers, et dist a Estonne: Par l'ame de moy, ie ne mangeay oncquesmais de chair atournee de telle guise: mais doresenauant ie ne me retourneroye pas hors de mon chemin par auoir la cuite. Sire, dist Estonne, quant is suis en desers d'Escosse, dont ie suis seigneur, ie cheuaucheray huit iours ou quinze que ie n'entreray en chastel ne en maison, et si ne verray feu ne personne viuant fors que bestes sauuages, et de celles mangeray atournees en ceste maniere, et mieulx me plaira que la viande de

l'empereur. Ainsi sen vont mangeant et cheuauchant iusques adonc quilz arriuerent sur une moult belle fontaine qui estoit en vne valee. Quant Estonne la vit il dist a Claudius, allons boire a ceste fontaine. Or beuuons, dist Estonne, du boire que le grant dieu a pourueu a toutes gens, et que me plaist mieulx que les ceruoises d'Angleterre.' (*La treselegante Hystoire du tresnoble Roy Perceforest*, Paris, 1531, fol. tome I, fol. lv, vers.)

After all, it may be doubted whether *la chaire nostree*, for so the French called the venison thus summarily prepared, was anything more than a mere rude kind of deer-ham.

NOTE 59, p. 149

There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed. 'There arose,' says Pitscottie, 'great trouble and deadly feuds in many parts of Scotland, both in the north and west parts. The Master of Forbes, in the north, slew the Laird of Meldrum, under tryst' (i.e., at an agreed and secure meeting): 'Likewise, the Laird of Drummelzier slew the Lord Fleming at the hawking; and, likewise, there was slaughter among many other great lords' (p. 121). Nor was the matter much mended under the government of the Earl of Angus; for though he caused the king to ride through all Scotland, 'under the pretence and colour of justice, to punish thief and traitor, none were found greater than were in their own company. And none at that time durst strive with a Douglas, nor yet a Douglas's man; for if they would, they got the worst. Therefore, none durst plainzie of no extortion, theft, reiff, nor slaughter, done to them by the Douglases, or their men; in that cause they were not heard, so long as the Douglas had the court in guiding.' (*History*, p. 133.)

Note 60, p. 150

The ancient Highlanders verified in their practice the lines of Gray: —

> An iron race the mountain cliffs maintain,
> Foes to the gentler genius of the plain;
> For where unwearied sinews must be found,
> With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground;
> To turn the torrent's swift descending flood;
> To tame the savage rushing from the wood;
> What wonder if, to patient valour train'd,
> They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd;
> And while their rocky ramparts round they see
> The rough abode of want and liberty,
> (As lawless force from confidence will grow,)
> Insult the plenty of the vales below?
>
> *Fragment on the Alliance of Education and Government.*

So far, indeed, was a creagh or foray from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighbouring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the Sassenach (Saxons or Lowlanders), for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach. Sir James Grant of Grant is in possession of a letter of apology from Cameron of Lochiel, whose men had committed some depredation upon a farm called Moines, occupied by one of the Grants. Lochiel assures Grant, that, however the mistake had happened, his instructions were precise, that the party should foray the province of Moray (a Lowland district), where, as he coolly observes, 'all men take their prey.'

Note 61, p. 155

This incident, like some other passages in the poem illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but

borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy. The following story I can only quote from tradition, but with such an assurance from those by whom it was communicated, as permits me little doubt of its authenticity. Early in the last century, John Gunn, a noted cateran, or Highland robber, infested Inverness-shire, and levied blackmail up to the walls of the provincial capital. A garrison was then maintained in the castle of that town, and their pay (country banks being unknown) was usually transmitted in specie, under the guard of a small escort. It chanced that the officer who commanded this little party was unexpectedly obliged to halt, about thirty miles from Inverness, at a miserable inn. About nightfall, a stranger in the Highland dress, and of very prepossessing appearance, entered the same house. Separate accommodation being impossible, the Englishman offered the newly arrived guest a part of his supper, which was accepted with reluctance. By the conversation he found his new acquaintance knew well all the passes of the country, which induced him eagerly to request his company on the ensuing morning. He neither disguised his business and charge, nor his apprehensions of that celebrated freebooter, John Gunn. The Highlander hesitated a moment, and then frankly consented to be his guide. Forth they set in the morning; and in travelling through a solitary and dreary glen, the discourse again turned on John Gunn. 'Would you like to see him?' said the guide; and without waiting an answer to this alarming question, he whistled, and the English officer, with his small party, was surrounded by a body of Highlanders, whose numbers put resistance out of question, and who were all well armed. 'Stranger,' resumed the guide, 'I am that very John Gunn by whom you feared to be intercepted, and not without cause; for I came to the inn last night with the express purpose of learning your route, that I and my followers might ease you of your charge by the road. But I am incapable of betraying the trust you reposed in me, and having convinced you that you were in my power,

I can only dismiss you unplundered and uninjured.' He then gave the officer directions for his journey, and disappeared with his party, as suddenly as they had presented themselves.

Note 62, p. 156

The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence, called the Dun of Bochastle, and indeed on the plain itself, are some intrenchments, which have been thought Roman. There is adjacent to Callender a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp.

Note 63, p. 156

The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true that, in formal combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances; but in private duel it was often otherwise. In that desperate combat which was fought between Quelus, a minion of Henry III of France, and Antraguet, with two seconds on each side, from which only two persons escaped alive, Quelus complained that his antagonist had over him the advantage of a poniard which he used in parrying, while his left hand, which he was forced to employ for the same purpose, was cruelly mangled. When he charged Antraguet with this odds, 'Thou hast done wrong,' answered he, 'to forget thy dagger at home. We are here to fight, and not to settle punctilios of arms.' In a similar duel, however, a younger brother of the house of Aubanye, in Angoulesme, behaved more generously on the like occasion, and at once threw away his dagger when his enemy challenged it as an undue advantage. But at this time hardly anything can be conceived more horridly brutal and sav-

age than the mode in which private quarrels were conducted in France. Those who were most jealous of the point of honour, and acquired the title of Raffinés, did not scruple to take every advantage of strength, numbers, surprise, and arms, to accomplish their revenge. The Sieur de Brantôme, to whose discourse on duels I am obliged for these particulars, gives the following account of the death and principles of his friend, the Baron de Vitaux: —

'J'ay oui conter à un Tireur d'armes, qui apprit à Millaud à en tirer, lequel s'appelloit Seigneur le Jacques Ferron, de la ville d'Ast, qui avoit esté à moy, il fut despuis tué à Saincte-Basille en Gascogne, lors que Monsieur du Mayne l'assiégea, lui servant d'Ingénieur; et de malheur, je l'avois addressé audit Baron quelques trois mois auparavant, pour l'exercer à tirer, bien qu'il en sçeust prou; mais il n'en fit compte: et le laissant, Millaud s'en servit, et le rendit fort adroit. Ce Seigneur Jacques donc me raconta, qu'il s'estoit monté sur un noyer, assez loing, pour en voir le combat, et qu'il ne vist jamais homme y aller plus bravement, ny plus résolument, ny de grace plus asseurée ny déterminée. Il commença de marcher de cinquante pas vers son ennemy, relevant souvent ses moustaches en haut d'une main; et estant à vingt pas de son ennemy, (non plustost,) il mit la main à l'espée qu'il tenoit en la main, non qu il l'eust tirée encore; mais en marchant, il fit voller le fourreau en l'air, en le secouant, ce qui est le beau de cela, et qui monstroit bien une grace de combat bien asseurée et froide, et nullement téméraire, comme il y en a qui tirent leurs espées de cinq cents pas de l'ennemy, voire de mille, comme j'en ay veu aucuns. Ainsi mourut ce brave Baron, le paragon de France, qu'on nommoit tel, à bien venger ses querelles, par grandes et déterminées résolutions. Il n'estoit pas seulement estimé en France, mais en Italie, Espaigne, Allemaigne, en Boulogne et Angleterre; et desiroient fort les Etrangers, venant en France, le voir; car je l'ay veu, tant sa renommée volloit. Il estoit fort petit de corps, mais fort grand de courage. Ses ennemis disoient qu'il ne tuoit pas bien ses gens, que par advantages et supercheries. Certes,

je tiens de grands capitaines, et mesme d'Italiens, qui ont estez d'autres fois les premiers vengeurs du monde, in *ogni modo*, disoient-ils, qui ont tenu cette maxime, qu'une supercherie ne se devoit payer que par semblable monnoye, et n'y alloit point là de déshonneur.' (*Œuvres de Brantôme*, Paris, 1787–88, VIII, 90–92.) It may be necessary to inform the reader that this paragon of France was the most foul assassin of his time, and had committed many desperate murders, chiefly by the assistance of his hired banditti; from which it may be conceived how little the point of honour of the period deserved its name. I have chosen to give my heroes, who are indeed of an earlier period, a stronger tincture of the spirit of chivalry.

NOTE 64, p. 159

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front rank of the clans were thus armed; and Captain Grose informs us that in 1747 the privates of the Forty-second Regiment, then in Flanders, were for the most part permitted to carry targets. (*Military Antiquities*, I, 164.) A person thus armed had a considerable advantage in private fray. Among verses between Swift and Sheridan, lately published by Dr. Barrett, there is an account of such an encounter, in which the circumstances, and consequently the relative superiority of the combatants, are precisely the reverse of those in the text: —

> A Highlander once fought a Frenchman at Margate,
> The weapons, a rapier, a backsword, and target;
> Brisk Monsieur advanced as fast as he could,
> But all his fine pushes were caught in the wood,
> And Sawny, with backsword, did slash him and nick him,
> While t' other, enraged that he could not once prick him,
> Cried, 'Sirrah, you rascal, you son of a whore,
> Me will fight you, be gar! if you 'll come from your door.'

Note 65, p. 159

The use of defensive armour, and particularly of the buckler or target, was general in Queen Elizabeth's time, although that of the single rapier seems to have been occasionally practised much earlier.[1] Rowland Yorke, however, who betrayed the fort of Zutphen to the Spaniards, for which good service he was afterwards poisoned by them, is said to have been the first who brought the rapier fight into general use. Fuller, speaking of the swash-bucklers or bullies of Queen Elizabeth's time, says, 'West Smithfield was formerly called Ruffians' Hall, where such men usually met, casually or otherwise, to try "masteries" with sword and buckler. More were frightened than hurt, more hurt than killed therewith, it being accounted unmanly to strike beneath the knee. But since that desperate traitor Rowland Yorke first introduced thrusting with rapiers, sword and buckler are disused.' In *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, a comedy printed in 1599, we have a pathetic complaint: 'Sword and buckler fight begins to grow out of use. I am sorry for it: I shall never see good manhood again. If it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up; then a tall man and a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or rabbit.' But the rapier had, upon the continent, long superseded in private duel the use of sword and shield. The masters of the noble science of defence were chiefly Italians. They made great mystery of their art and mode of instruction, never suffered any person to be present but the scholar who was to be taught, and even examined closets, beds, and other places of possible concealment. Their lessons often gave the most treacherous advantages; for the challenger, having the right to choose his weapons, frequently selected some strange, unusual, and inconvenient kind of arms, the use of which he practised under these instructors, and thus killed at his ease his antagonist, to whom it was presented for the first time on the field of battle. (See Brantôme's *Discourse on Duels*, and the work on the same subject,

[1] See Douce's *Illustrations of Shakspeare*, II, 61.

'*si gentement ecrit*,' by the venerable Dr. Paris de Puteo.) The Highlanders continued to use broadsword and target until disarmed after the affair of 1745–46.

NOTE 66, p. 160

I have not ventured to render this duel so savagely desperate as that of the celebrated Sir Ewan of Lochiel, chief of the Clan Cameron, called, from his sable complexion, Ewan Dhu. He was the last man in Scotland who maintained the royal cause during the great civil war, and his constant incursions rendered him a very unpleasant neighbour to the republican garrison at Inverlochy, now Fort William. The governor of the fort detached a party of three hundred men to lay waste Lochiel's possessions, and cut down his trees; but, in a sudden and desperate attack made upon them by the chieftain with very inferior numbers, they were almost all cut to pieces. The skirmish is detailed in a curious memoir of Sir Ewan's life, printed in the Appendix of Pennant's *Scottish Tour* (I, 375): —

'In this engagement, Lochiel himself had several wonderful escapes. In the retreat of the English, one of the strongest and bravest of the officers retired behind a bush, when he observed Lochiel pursuing, and seeing him unaccompanied with any, he leapt out, and thought him his prey. They met one another with equal fury. The combat was long and doubtful: the English gentleman had by far the advantage in strength and size; but Lochiel, exceeding him in nimbleness and agility, in the end tript the sword out of his hand: they closed and wrestled, till both fell to the ground in each other's arms. The English officer got above Lochiel, and pressed him hard, but stretching forth his neck, by attempting to disengage himself, Lochiel, who by this time had his hands at liberty, with his left hand seized him by the collar, and jumping at his extended throat, he bit it with his teeth quite through, and kept such a hold of his grasp, that he brought away his mouthful: this, he said, *was the sweetest bit he ever had in his lifetime*.'

Note 67, p. 166

An eminence on the north-east of the castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood. It is thus apostrophised by J. Johnston: —

> Discordia tristis
> Heu quoties procerum sanguine tinxit humum!
> Hoc uno infelix, et felix cetera; nusquam
> Lætior aut cœli frons geniusve soli.

The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdack, Duke of Albany, Duncan Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart, were executed at Stirling, in 1425. They were beheaded upon an eminence without the castle walls, but making part of the same hill, from whence they could behold their strong castle of Doune, and their extensive possessions. This 'heading hill,' as it was sometimes termed, bears commonly the less terrible name of Hurly-hacket, from its having been the scene of a courtly amusement alluded to by Sir David Lindsay, who says of the pastimes in which the young king was engaged, —

> Some harled him to the Hurly-hacket;

which consisted in sliding, in some sort of chair it may be supposed, from top to bottom of a smooth bank. The boys of Edinburgh, about twenty years ago, used to play at the hurly-hacket on the Calton Hill, using for their seat a horse's skull.

Note 68, p. 166

Every burgh of Scotland of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn play or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those

who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesley has latinised it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles. At Dumfries, a silver gun was substituted, and the contention transferred to fire-arms. The ceremony, as there performed, is the subject of an excellent Scottish poem, by Mr. John Mayne, entitled the *Siller Gun*, 1808, which surpasses the efforts of Ferguson, and comes near those of Burns.

Of James's attachment to archery, Pitscottie, the faithful though rude recorder of the manners of that period, has given us evidence: —

'In this year there came an embassador out of England, named Lord William Howard, with a bishop with him, with many other gentlemen, to the number of threescore horse, which were all able men and waled [picked] men for all kind of games and pastimes, shooting, louping, running, wrestling, and casting of the stone, but they were well 'sayed [essayed or tried] ere they past out of Scotland, and that by their own provocation: but ever they tint: till at last, the Queen of Scotland, the king's mother, favoured the Englishmen, because she was the King of England's sister: and therefore she took an enterprise of archery upon the English-men's hands, contrary her son the king, and any six in Scotland that he would wale, either gentlemen or yeomen, that the English-men should shoot against them, either at pricks, revers, or buts, as the Scots pleased.

'The king, hearing this of his mother, was content, and gart her pawn a hundred crowns, and a tun of wine, upon the English-men's hands; and he incontinent laid down as much for the Scottish-men. The field and ground was chosen in St. Andrews, and three landed men and three yeomen chosen to shoot against the English-men, to wit, David Wemyss of that ilk, David

Arnot of that ilk, and Mr. John Wedderburn, vicar of Dundee; the yeomen, John Thomson, in Leith, Steven Taburner, with a piper, called Alexander Bailie; they shot very near, and warred [worsted] the English-men of the enterprise, and wan the hundred crowns and the tun of wine, which made the king very merry that his men wan the victory.' (*History*, p. 147.)

NOTE 69, p. 168

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the sixth Parliament of Queen Mary, c. 61, A.D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that, 'na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise.' But in 1561 the 'rascal multitude,' says John Knox, 'were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of many years left and damned by statute and act of Parliament; yet would they not be forbidden.' Accordingly, they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk that these profane festivities were continued down to 1591.[1] Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England; for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him, because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime. Much curious information on this subject may be found in the Preliminary Dissertation to the late Mr. Ritson's edition of the songs respecting this memorable

[1] *Book of the Universal Kirk*, p. 414.

outlaw. The game of Robin Hood was usually acted in May, and he was associated with the morrice-dancers, on whom so much illustration has been bestowed by the commentators on Shakespeare. A very lively picture of these festivities, containing a great deal of curious information on the subject of the private life and amusements of our ancestors, was thrown, by the late ingenious Mr. Strutt, into his romance entitled *Queenhoo Hall*, published after his death, in 1808.

Note 70, p. 169

The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus. But the king's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglases, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft. I would have availed myself more fully of the simple and affecting circumstances of the old history, had they not been already woven into a pathetic ballad by my friend Mr. Finlay.[1]

'His (the king's) implacability (towards the family of Douglas) did also appear in his carriage towards Archibald of Kilspindie, whom he, when he was a child, loved singularly well for his ability of body, and was wont to call him his Grey-Steill.[2] Archibald, being banished into England, could not well comport with the humour of that nation, which he thought to be too proud, and that they had too high a conceit of themselves, joined with a contempt and despising of all others. Wherefore, being wearied of that life, and remembering the king's favour of old towards him, he determined to try the king's mercifulness and clemency. So he comes into Scotland, and taking occasion of the king's hunting in the park at Stirling, he casts himself to be in his way, as he was coming home to the castle. So soon as the king saw him afar off, ere he came near, he guessed it was he, and said to one of his courtiers, yonder is my Grey-Steill,

[1] See *Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads*, Glasgow, 1808, II, 117.
[2] A champion of popular romance. See Ellis's *Romances*, III.

Archibald of Kilspindie, if he be alive. The other answered, that it could not be he, and that he durst not come into the king's presence. The king approaching, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon, and promised from thenceforward to abstain from meddling in public affairs, and to lead a quiet and private life. The king went by, without giving him any answer, and trotted a good round pace up the hill. Kilspindie followed, and, though he wore on him a secret, or shirt of mail, for his particular enemies, was as soon at the castle gate as the king. There he sat him down upon a stone without, and entreated some of the king's servants for a cup of drink, being weary and thirsty; but they, fearing the king's displeasure, durst give him none. When the king was set at his dinner, he asked what he had done, what he had said, and whither he had gone? It was told him that he had desired a cup of drink, and had gotten none. The king reproved them very sharply for their discourtesy, and told them, that if he had not taken an oath that no Douglas should ever serve him, he would have received him into his service, for he had seen him sometime a man of great ability. Then he sent him word to go to Leith, and expect his further pleasure. Then some kinsman of David Falconer, the canonier, that was slain at Tantallon, began to quarrel with Archibald about the matter, wherewith the king showed himself not well pleased when he heard of it. Then he commanded him to go to France for a certain space, till he heard further from him. And so he did, and died shortly after. This gave occasion to the King of England (Henry VIII) to blame his nephew, alleging the old saying, That a king's face should give grace. For this Archibald (whatsoever were Angus's or Sir George's fault) had not been principal actor of any thing, nor no counsellor nor stirrer up, but only a follower of his friends, and that noways cruelly disposed.' (Hume of Godscroft, II, 107.)

NOTE 71, p. 169

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the

animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus, in the *Cokes Tale of Gamelyn*, ascribed to Chaucer: —

> There happed to be there beside
> Tryed a wrestling;
> And therefore there was y-setten
> A ram and als a ring.

Again the *Litil Geste of Robin Hood:* —

> By a bridge was a wrestling,
> And there taryed was he,
> And there was all the best yemen
> Of all the west countrey.
> A full fayre game there was set up,
> A white bull up y-pight,
> A great courser with saddle and brydle,
> With gold burnished full bryght;
> A payre of gloves, a red golde ringe,
> A pipe of wyne, good fay;
> What man bereth him best, I wis,
> The prise shall bear away.
>
> Ritson's *Robin Hood*, I.

NOTE 72, p. 183

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the Foot-Band. The satirical poet Sir David Lindsay (or the person who wrote the Prologue to his play of the *Three Estaites*,) has introduced Finlay of the Foot-Band, who, after much swaggering upon the stage, is at length put to flight by the Fool, who terrifies him by means of a sheep's skull upon a pole. I have rather chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period, than of this Scottish

Thraso. These partook of the character of the Adventurous Companions of Froissart, or the Condottieri of Italy.

One of the best and liveliest traits of such manners is the last will of a leader, called Geffroy Tête Noir, who having been slightly wounded in a skirmish, his intemperance brought on a mortal disease. When he found himself dying, he summoned to his bedside the adventurers whom he commanded, and thus addressed them: —

'Fayre sirs, quod Geffray, I knowe well ye have alwayes served and honoured me as men ought to serve their soveraynge and capitayne, and I shal be the gladder if ye wyll agre to have to your capitayne one that is discended of my bloode. Beholde here Aleyne Roux, my cosyn, and Peter his brother, who are men of armes and of my blode. I require you to make Aleyne youre capitayne, and to swere to hym faythe, obeysaunce, love, and loyalte, here in my presence, and also to his brother: howe be it, I wyll that Aleyne have the soverayne charge. Sir, quod they, we are well content, for ye hauve ryght well chosen. There all the companyons made them breke no poynt of that ye have ordayned and commaunded.' (Lord Berners' *Froissart.*)

Note 73, p. 186

The jongleurs or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of St. Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod. In Scotland, these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters, as appears from a case reported by Fountainhall: —

'Reid the mountebank pursues Scot of Harden and his lady, for stealing away from him a little girl, called the tumbling-lassie, that danced upon his stage: and he claimed damages,

and produced a contract, whereby he bought her from her mother for 30*l.* Scots. But we have no slaves in Scotland, and mothers cannot sell their bairns; and physicians attested, the employment of tumbling would kill her; and her joints were now grown stiff, and she declined to return; though she was at least a 'prentice, and so could not run away from her master: yet some cited Moses's law, that if a servant shelter himself with thee, against his master's cruelty, thou shalt surely not deliver him up. The Lords, *renitente cancellario*, assoilzied Harden, on the 27th of January (1687.)' (Fountainhall's *Decisions*, I, p. 439.)[1]

The facetious qualities of the ape soon rendered him an acceptable addition to the strolling band of the jongleur. Ben Jonson, in his splenetic introduction to the comedy of *Bartholomew Fair*, is at pains to inform the audience 'that he has ne'er a sword-and-buckler man in his Fair, nor a juggler, with a well-educated ape, to come over the chaine for the King of England, and back again for the prince, and sit still on his haunches for the Pope and the King of Spaine.'

Note 74, p. 195

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes as to require to hear them on their deathbed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr. Riddel of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the *Dandling of the Bairns*, for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous freebooter, that he composed the tune known by the name of *Macpherson's Rant* while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. A sim-

[1] Though less to my purpose, I cannot help noticing a circumstance respecting another of this Mr. Reid's attendants, which occurred during James II's zeal for Catholic proselytism, and is told by Fountainhall, with dry Scottish irony. 'January 17th, 1687.— Reid the mountebank is received into the Popish church, and one of his blackamores was persuaded to accept of baptism from the Popish priests, and to turn Christian papist; which was a great trophy: he was called James, after the king and chancellor, and the Apostle James.' (*Decisions*, p. 440.)

ilar story is recounted of a Welsh bard, who composed and played on his deathbed the air called *Dafyddy Garregg Wen.* But the most curious example is given by Brantôme, of a maid of honour at the court of France, entitled *Mademoiselle de Limeuil.*

'Durant sa maladie, dont elle trespassa, jamais elle ne cessa, ains causa tousjours; car elle estoit fort grande parleuse, brocardeuse, et très-bien et fort à propos, et très-belle avec cela. Quand l'heure de sa fin fut venue, elle fit venir a soy son valet, (ainsi que le filles de la cour en ont chacune un,) qui s'appelloit Julien, et scavoit très-bien joüer du violon. "Julien," luy dit elle, "prenez vostre violon, et sonnez moy tousjours jusques a ce que me voyez morte (car je m'y en vais) la défaite des Suisses, et le mieux que vous pourrez, et quand vous serez sur le mot, 'Tout est perdu,' sonnez le par quatre ou cinq fois, le plus piteusement que vous pourrez," ce qui fit l'autre, et elle-mesme luy aidoit de la voix, et quand ce vint "tout est perdu," elle le réïtera par deux fois; et se tournant de l'autre costé du chevet, elle dit à ses compagnes: "Tout est perdu à ce coup, et à bon escient;" et ainsi décéda. Voila une morte joyeuse et plaisante. Je tiens ce conte de deux de ses compagnes, dignes de foi, qui virent joüer ce mystere.' (*Œuvres de Brantôme*, III, 507.)

The tune to which this fair lady chose to make her final exit was composed on the defeat of the Swiss at Marignano. The burden is quoted by Panurge, in Rabelais, and consists of these words, imitating the jargon of the Swiss, which is a mixture of French and German: —

'Tout est velore
La Tintelore,
Tout est verlore, bi Got!'

NOTE 75, p. 196

A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

'In this roughly-wooded island,[1] the country people secreted

[1] That at the eastern extremity of Loch Katrine, so often mentioned in the text.

their wives and children, and their most valuable effects, from the rapacity of Cromwell's soldiers, during their inroad into this country, in the time of the republic. These invaders, not venturing to ascend by the ladders, along the side of the lake, took a more circuitous road, through the heart of the Trosachs, the most frequented path at that time, which penetrates the wilderness about half way between Binean and the lake, by a tract called Yea-chilleach, or the Old Wife's Bog.

'In one of the defiles of this by-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy, and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to that pass.[1] In revenge of this insult the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, to violate the women, and put the children to death. With this brutal intention, one of the party, more expert than the rest, swam towards the island, to fetch the boat to his comrades, which had carried the women to their asylum, and lay moored in one of the creeks. His companions stood on the shore of the mainland, in full view of all that was to pass, waiting anxiously for his return with the boat. But just as the swimmer had got to the nearest point of the island, and was laying hold of a black rock, to get on shore, a heroine, who stood on the very point where he meant to land, hastily snatching a dagger from below her apron, with one stroke severed his head from the body. His party seeing this disaster, and relinquishing all future hope of revenge or conquest, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation. This amazon's great-grandson lives at Bridge of Turk, who, besides others, attests the anecdote.' (*Sketch of the Scenery near Callender*, Stirling, 1806, p. 20.) I have only to add to this account that the heroine's name was Helen Stuart.

Note 76, p. 199

A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer

[1] Beallach an duine.

together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the Tinchel.

Note 77, p. 211

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V, of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the King of the Commons. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled *The Gaberlunzie Man*, and *We'll gae nae mair a Roving*, are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

Another adventure, which had nearly cost James his life, is said to have taken place at the village of Cramond, near Edinburgh, where he had rendered his addresses acceptable to a pretty girl of the lower rank. Four or five persons, whether relations or lovers of his mistress is uncertain, beset the disguised monarch, as he returned from his rendezvous. Naturally gallant, and an admirable master of his weapon, the king took post on the high and narrow bridge over the Almond River, and defended himself bravely with his sword. A peasant, who was threshing in a neighbouring barn, came out upon the noise, and, whether moved by compassion or by natural gallantry, took the weaker side, and laid about with his flail so effectually as to disperse the assailants, well threshed, even according to the letter. He then conducted the king into his barn, where his guest requested a basin and a towel, to remove the stains of the broil. This being procured with difficulty, James employed

himself in learning what was the summit of his deliverer's earthly wishes, and found that they were bounded by the desire of possessing, in property, the farm of Braehead, upon which he laboured as a bondsman. The lands chanced to belong to the crown; and James directed him to come to the palace of Holyrood, and enquire for the Guidman (i.e., farmer) of Ballengiech, a name by which he was known in his excursions, and which answered to the *Il Bondocani* of Haroun Alraschid. He presented himself accordingly, and found, with due astonishment, that he had saved his monarch's life, and that he was to be gratified with a crown-charter of the lands of Braehead, under the service of presenting a ewer, basin, and towel, for the king to wash his hands, when he shall happen to pass the Bridge of Cramond. This person was ancestor of the Howisons of Braehead, in Mid-Lothian, a respectable family, who continue to hold the lands (now passed into the female line) under the same tenure.

Another of James's frolics is thus narrated by Mr. Campbell, from the *Statistical Account:* 'Being once benighted when out a-hunting, and separated from his attendants, he happened to enter a cottage in the midst of a moor, at the foot of the Ochil hills, near Alloa, where, unknown, he was kindly received. In order to regale their unexpected guest, the gudeman (i.e., landlord, farmer) desired the gudewife to fetch the hen that roosted nearest the cock, which is always the plumpest, for the stranger's supper. The king, highly pleased with his night's lodging and hospitable entertainment, told mine host, at parting, that he should be glad to return his civility, and requested that the first time he came to Stirling he would call at the castle, and enquire for the Gudeman of Ballenguich. Donaldson, the landlord, did not fail to call on the Gudeman of Ballenguich, when his astonishment at finding that the king had been his guest afforded no small amusement to the merry monarch and his courtiers; and, to carry on the pleasantry, he was thenceforth designated by James with the title of King of the Moors, which name and designation have descended from father to son ever since, and they

have continued in possession of the identical spot, the property of Mr. Erskine of Mar, till very lately, when this gentleman, with reluctance, turned out the descendant and representative of the King of the Moors, on account of his majesty's invincible indolence, and great dislike to reform or innovation of any kind, although, from the spirited example of his neighbour tenants on the same estate, he is convinced similar exertion would promote his advantage.'

The author requests permission yet further to verify the subject of his poem, by an extract from the genealogical work of Buchanan of Auchmar, upon Scottish surnames.

'This John Buchanan of Auchmar and Arnpryor was afterwards termed King of Kippen,[1] upon the following account: King James V, a very sociable, debonair prince, residing at Stirling, in Buchanan of Arnpryor's time, carriers were very frequently passing along the common road, being near Arnpryor's house, with necessaries for the use of the king's family; and he, having some extraordinary occasion, ordered one of these carriers to leave his load at his house, and he would pay him for it; which the carrier refused to do, telling him he was the king's carrier, and his load for his majesty's use; to which Arnpryor seemed to have small regard, compelling the carrier, in the end, to leave his load; telling him, if King James was King of Scotland, he was King of Kippen, so that it was reasonable he should share with his neighbour king in some of these loads, so frequently carried that road. The carrier representing this usage, and telling the story, as Arnpryor spoke it, to some of the king's servants, it came at length to his majesty's ears, who, shortly thereafter, with a few attendants, came to visit his neighbour king, who was in the mean time at dinner. King James having sent a servant to demand access, was denied the same by a tall fellow with a battle-axe who stood porter at the gate, telling, there could be no access till dinner was over. This answer not satisfying the king, he sent to demand access a second time; upon which he was desired by the porter to desist,

[1] A small district of Perthshire.

otherwise he would find cause to repent his rudeness. His majesty finding this method would not do, desired the porter to tell his master that the Goodman of Ballageigh desired to speak with the King of Kippen. The porter telling Arnpryor so much, he, in all humble manner, came and received the king, and having entertained him with much sumptuousness and jollity, became so agreeable to King James, that he allowed him to take so much of any provision he found carrying that road as he had occasion for; and seeing he made the first visit, desired Arnpryor in a few days to return him a second to Stirling, which he performed, and continued in very much favour with the king, always thereafter being termed King of Kippen while he lived.' (Buchanan's *Essay upon the Family of Buchanan*, Edinburgh, 1775, 8vo, p. 74.)

The readers of Ariosto must give credit for the amiable features with which he is represented, since he is generally considered as the prototype of Zerbino, the most interesting hero of the *Orlando Furioso.*

NOTE 78, p. 213

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdoun. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his *Complaint of the Papingo:* —

> 'Adieu, fair Snawdoun, with thy towers high,
> Thy chaple-royal, park, and table round;
> May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee,
> Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
> Whilk doth againe thy royal rock rebound.'

Mr. Chalmers, in his late excellent edition of Sir David Lindsay's works, has refuted the chimerical derivation of Snawdoun from snedding, or cutting. It was probably derived from the romantic legend which connected Stirling with King Arthur, to which the mention of the Round Table gives countenance. The ring within which justs were formerly practised, in the castle

park, is still called the Round Table. Snawdoun is the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

It appears that the real name by which James was actually distinguished in his private excursions, was the Goodman of Ballenguich; derived from a steep pass leading up to the Castle of Stirling, so called. But the epithet would not have suited poetry, and would besides at once, and prematurely, have announced the plot to many of my countrymen, among whom the traditional stories above mentioned are still current.

Note 79, p. 318

The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short scythe, which he holds in his right hand. They carry on this double process with great spirit and dexterity.

Note 80, p. 323

It was affirmed by the prisoners of war that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

Note 81, p. 324

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles. An eyewitness has given the following account of his demeanour towards the end of the action: —

'It was near seven o'clock; Bonaparte, who till then had remained upon the ridge of the hill whence he could best behold what passed, contemplated with a stern countenance, the scene of this horrible slaughter. The more that obstacles seemed to multiply, the more his obstinacy seemed to increase. He became indignant at these unforeseen difficulties; and, far from fearing

to push to extremities an army whose confidence in him was boundless, he ceased not to pour down fresh troops, and to give orders to march forward — to charge with the bayonet — to carry by storm. He was repeatedly informed, from different points, that the day went against him, and that the troops seemed to be disordered; to which he only replied, "En-avant! En-avant!"

'One general sent to inform the Emperor that he was in a position which he could not maintain, because it was commanded by a battery, and requested to know, at the same time, in what way he should protect his division from the murderous fire of the English artillery. "Let him storm the battery," replied Bonaparte, and turned his back on the aide-de-camp who brought the message.' (*Relatione de la Bataille de Mont-St.-Jean. Par un Témoin Oculaire*, Paris, 1815, 8vo, p. 51.)

NOTE 82, p. 325

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards, at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down, indeed, to a hollow part of the highroad, leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards, and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of 'Vive l'Empereur,' which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned, which the rising banks on each side rendered secure from all such balls as did not come in a straight line. He witnessed the earlier part of the battle from places yet more remote, particularly from an observatory which had been placed there by the King of the Nether-

lands, some weeks before, for the purpose of surveying the country.[1] It is not meant to infer from these particulars that Napoleon showed, on that memorable occasion, the least deficiency in personal courage; on the contrary, he evinced the greatest composure and presence of mind during the whole action. But it is no less true that report has erred in ascribing to him any desperate efforts of valour for recovery of the battle; and it is remarkable that during the whole carnage none of his suite were either killed or wounded, whereas scarcely one of the Duke of Wellington's personal attendants escaped unhurt.

Note 83, p. 325

In riding up to a regiment which was hard-pressed, the duke called to the men, 'Soldiers, we must never be beat, — what will they say in England?' It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

Note 84, p. 327

A private soldier of the Ninety-Fifth Regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to 'a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles.'

Note 85, p. 328

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The Imperial Guards, in particular, hardly stood till the British were within thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, 'The Guards never yield — they die.' The same author has covered the plateau, or eminence, of St. Jean, which formed the British position, with redoubts and intrenchments which never had an

[1] The mistakes concerning this observatory have been mutual. The English supposed it was erected for the use of Bonaparte: and a French writer affirms it was constructed by the Duke of Wellington.

existence. As the narrative, which is in many respects curious, was written by an eyewitness, he was probably deceived by the appearance of a road and ditch which run along part of the hill. It may be also mentioned, in criticising this work, that the writer mentions the Château of Hougomont to have been carried by the French, although it was resolutely and successfully defended during the whole action. The enemy, indeed, possessed themselves of the wood by which it is surrounded, and at length set fire to the house itself; but the British (a detachment of the Guards, under the command of Colonel Macdonnell, and afterwards of Colonel Home) made good the garden, and thus preserved, by their desperate resistance, the post which covered the return of the Duke of Wellington's right flank.

GLOSSARY

abbaye, an abbey.
aboon, above.
acton, a buckram vest worn under armour.
ain, own.
air, a sand-bank.
airn, iron.
almagest, an astronomical or astrological treatise.
Almayn, German.
amice, an ecclesiastical vestment.
amrie, ambry, a cupboard, a locker.
an, if.
ance, once.
ane, one.
anerly, alone.
aneugh, enough.
angel, an old English gold coin.
arquebus, a hagbut, or heavy musket.
assagay, a slender spear or lance.
atabal, a kind of kettle-drum.
auld, old; **auld Reekie**, Edinburgh.
aventayle, the movable front of a helmet.
avoid thee, begone.

bairn, a child.
baith, both.
baldric, a belt.
bale, a beacon-fire.
ballium, a fortified court.
bandelier, a belt for carrying ammunition.
ban-dog, a watch-dog.
bandrol, a kind of banner or ensign.
banes, bones.
bang, strike violently, beat, surpass.
barbican, the fortification at a castle-gate.
barded, armoured (said of horses).
barding, horse-armour.
barret-cap, a cloth cap.
bartizan, a small overhanging turret.
basnet, a light helmet.
bassened, having a white stripe down the face.
battalia, a battalion, an army (*not* a plural).
battle, an army.
beadsman, one hired to offer prayers for another.
beamed, having a horn of the fourth year.
beaver, the movable front of a helmet.
Beltane, the first of May (a Celtic festival).
bend, bind.
bend (noun), a heraldic term.
bent, a slope; also, aimed.
beshrew, may evil befall, confound.
bicker, a cup, a wooden vessel.
bill, a kind of battle-axe or halberd.
billmen, troops armed with the bill.
black-jack, a leather jug or pitcher.
blaze, blazon, proclaim.
blink, a glimpse.
bluidy, bloody.
bonail, i. e., **bonallez**, a god-speed, parting with a friend.
bonnet-pieces, gold coins with the king's cap (bonnet) on them.
boot and bale, help and hurt.
boune, bowne, prepare, make ready.
bouné, ready, prepared.
bountith, a gratuity.
bourd, a jest.
bow o' kye, a herd of cattle.
bower, a chamber, a lodging-place, a lady's apartments.
bra', braw, brave.
brach, a bitch-hound.
bracken, fern.
brae, a hillside.
braid, broad.
branking, prancing.
brast, burst.
bratchet, a slowhound.

brigantine, a kind of body armour.
brigg, a bridge.
brock, a badger.
broke, quartered (the cutting up of a deer).
brose, broth.
brotikins, buskins.
buff, a thick cloth.
burn, a brook.
busk, dress, prepare.
buxom, lively.
by times, betimes, early.

caird, a tinker.
cairn, a heap of stones, a rocky point.
canna, cotton-grass.
cantle, the crown.
canty, cheerful, lively.
cap of maintenance, a cap worn by the king-at-arms or chief herald.
carle, a fellow.
carline, a woman, a witch.
carp, talk.
cast, a pair (of hawks).
causey, a causeway.
chanters, the pipes of the bagpipe.
check at, meditate attack (in falconry).
cheer, face, countenance.
claymore, a large sword.
clerk, a scholar.
clip, clasp, embrace.
clout, mend.
cogie, a small wooden bowl.
combust, an astrological term.
corbel, a bracket.
coronach, a dirge.
correi, a hollow in a hillside, a resort of game.
crabs, crab-apples.
craig, the head.
crenell, an aperture for shooting arrows through.
cresset, a hanging lamp or chandelier.
crouse, bold.
culver, a small cannon.
cumber, trouble.
cummer, a gossip, an intimate friend.
curch, a matron's coif, or head-dress.
cushat-dove, a wood-pigeon.
cutty, short.

daggled, bespattered.
darkling, in the dark.
daunder, saunter, wander.
daunton, subdue, tame.
deas, a dais, a platform.
deft, skilful.
demi-volt, a movement in horsemanship.
dern, hid.
dight, decked, dressed, prepared.
dingle, a closely wooded hollow.
dinna, do not.
dinnle, tinkle, thrill.
dint, strike, knock.
dirdum, an uproar.
donjon, the main tower or keep of a castle.
doom, judgment, arbitration.
double tressure, a kind of border in heraldry.
dought, was able, could.
down, a hill.
downa, do not.
dramock, meal and water.
drie, suffer, endure.
drouth, thirst.
duddies, rags, tatters.
dwam, a swoon, a fainting fit.

earn, erne, an eagle.
eburnine, made of ivory.
een, eyes.
embossed, exhausted by running, foaming at the mouth (hunter's term).
emprise, enterprise.
ensenzie, an ensign, a war-cry.
even, spotless, pure.

failzie, failure.
falcon, a kind of small cannon.
fand, found.
fang, to catch.
far yaud, the signal made by a shepherd to his dog, when he is to drive away some sheep at a distance.
Fastern's night, Shrove Tuesday.
fauld, a sheep-fold.

fay, faith.
ferlie, a marvel.
fieldfare, a species of thrush.
fleech, flatter, cajole.
fiemens-firth, an asylum for outlaws.
foray, a predatory inroad.
force, a waterfall.
fosse, a ditch, a moat.
fou, full, tipsy.
frae, from.
fretted, adorned with raised work.
fro, from.
frounced, flounced, plaited.

gae, go; **gaed**, went.
gaitling, a young child.
galliard, a lively dance.
gallowglasses, heavy-armed soldiers (Celtic).
gane, gone.
gang, go.
gar, make.
gazehound, a hound that pursues by sight rather than scent.
gear, goods, possessions.
gent, high-born, valiant and courteous.
gest, a deed, an exploit.
ghast, ghastly.
gie, give.
gin, if.
gipon, a doublet or jacket worn under armour.
glaive, a broadsword.
glamour, a magical illusion.
glee-maiden, a dancing-girl.
gleg, quick, sharp, lively.
glidders, slippery stones.
glozing, flattering.
gonfalone, a banner or ensign.
gorged, having the throat cut.
gorget, armour for the throat.
graith, armour.
gramarye, magic.
gramercy, great thanks (French, *grand merci*).
gree, prize.
greet and grane, weep and groan.
gripple, grasping, miserly.
grisly, horrible, grim.
guarded, edged, trimmed.
gude, good.
gules, red (heraldic).
gylte, a young sow.

hackbuteer, a soldier armed with hackbut or hagbut, a musketeer.
hae't, **haet**, an atom.
haffets, cheeks.
hag, broken ground in a bog.
hagbut (**hackbut**, **haquebut**, **arquebus**, **harquebuss**, etc.), a heavy musket.
halberd, **halbert**, a combined spear and battle-axe.
hale, haul, drag.
hame, home.
handsel, a gift, earnest money.
hanger, a short broadsword.
harried, plundered, sacked.
haud, hold.
hearse, a canopy over a tomb, or the tomb itself.
heeze, **heise**, hoist, raise.
hent, seize.
heriot, tribute due to a lord from a vassal.
heron-shew, a young heron.
hight, called, named, promised.
holt, wood, woodland.
hosen, hose (old plural).
howf, **howff**, a haunt, a resort.

idlesse, idleness.
ilka, each, every.
imp, a child.
inch, an island.

jack, a leather jacket, a kind of armour for the body.
jennet, a small Spanish horse.
jerkin, a kind of short coat.
jerrid, a wooden javelin about five feet long.
jowing, ringing or tolling.

kale, broth.
kebbuck, cheese.
keek, peep.
ken, know.
kern, a light-armed soldier (Celtic).

kill, a cell.
kipper, salmon or sea trout.
kirk, a church.
kirn, the Scottish harvest-home.
kirtle, a skirt, a gown.
kist, a chest.
kittle, ticklish, delicate.
knosp, a knob (architectural).
knowe, a knoll, a hillock.
kye, cows.

lair, learning.
lair, to stick in the mud.
largesse, largess, liberality, gift.
lauds, psalms.
launcegay, a kind of spear.
laverock, a lark.
leading-staff, a staff carried by a commanding officer.
leaguer, a camp.
leal-fast, loyal, faithful.
leash, a thong for leading a greyhound; also the hounds so led.
leister, to spear.
leven, a lawn, an open space between or among woods.
leveret, a young hare.
levin, lightning, thunderbolt.
libbard, a leopard.
Lincoln green, a cloth worn by huntsmen.
linn, a waterfall, a pool below a fall, a precipice.
linstock, lintstock, a handle for the lint or match used in firing cannon.
lists, the enclosure for a tournament.
litherlie, mischievous, vicious.
loon, a rogue, a strumpet.
loot, let.
lorn, lost.
loup, leap.
lourd, rather.
lout, bend, stoop.
lurch, rob.
lurcher, a dog that **lurches** (lurks), or lies in wait for game.
lurdane, a blockhead.
lyke-wake, the watching of a corpse before burial.
lyme-dog, a bloodhound.

mair, more.
make, do.
malison, a malediction, a curse.
Malvoisie, Malmsey wine.
march, a border, a frontier.
march-treason, offences committed on the Border.
massy, massive.
maukin, a hare.
maun, must.
mavis, the thrush.
meikle, much, great.
melle, mell, meddle.
merk, a Scottish coin worth about $13\frac{1}{3}d.$
merle, the blackbird.
merlin, a species of falcon.
mewed, shut up, confined.
mickle, much, great.
minion, favourite.
miniver, a kind of fur.
mirk, dark.
mony, many.
moonlight, smuggled spirits.
morion, a steel cap, a helmet.
morrice-pike, a long heavy spear.
morris, a kind of dance.
morsing-horns, powder-flasks.
moss, a morass, a bog.
mot, mote, must, might.
muckle, much, large.
muir, a moor, a heath.
mullet, a figure of a star, usually with five straight points.

nae, no.
need-fire, a beacon-fire.
neist, next.
nese, a nose.

oe, an island.
O hone, alas!
Omrahs, nobles (Turkish).
or, gold (heraldic).
orra, odd, occasional.
owches, jewels.
ower, over, too.

pall, fine or rich cloth.
pallioun, a pavilion.

palmer, a pilgrim to the Holy Land.
pardoner, a seller of priestly indulgences.
partisan, a halberd, a combination of spear and battle-axe.
peel, a Border tower.
pensils, small pennons or streamers.
pentacle, a magic diagram.
pibroch, a Highland air on the bagpipe.
pied, variegated.
pike, pick.
pinnet, a pinnacle.
pirn, a spool, a reel.
placket, a stomacher, a petticoat, a slit in a petticoat, etc.
plate-jack, coat-armour.
plump, a body of cavalry, a group, a company.
poke, a sack, a pocket.
port, a lively tune, a catch.
post and pair, an old game at cards.
pow, a head.
pranked, dressed up, adorned.
presence, the royal presence-chamber.
pricked, spurred.
pricker, a horseman, a mounted soldier.
propine, a present.
prore, the prow.
pryse, the note blown at the death of the game.
puir, poor.
pursuivant, an attendant on a herald.

quaigh, a wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.
quarry, game (hunter's term).
quatre-feuille, quatrefoil (Gothic ornament).
quit, requite.

rack, a floating cloud.
racking, flying, like a breaking cloud.
rade, rode.
rais, the master of a vessel.
reads, counsels.
reave, tear away.
rebeck, an ancient musical instrument, an early form of the fiddle.
rede, a story, counsel, advice.
reiver, a plunderer, a robber.
reliquaire, a repository for relics.
retrograde, an astrological term.
rie, a prince or chief; **O hone a rie,** alas for the chief!
rin, run.
risp, creak.
rive, tear.
rochet, a bishop's short surplice.
rokelay, a short cloak.
rood, a cross (as in **Holy-Rood**).
room, a piece of land.
rowan, the mountain-ash.
runnel, a small stream of water.
ruth, pity, compassion.

sack, Sherry or Canary wine.
sackless, innocent.
sae, so.
saga, a Scandinavian epic.
sained, blessed.
sair, sore, very.
sall, shall.
saltier, in heraldry an ordinary in the form of a St. Andrew's cross.
salvo-shot, a salute of artillery.
sark, a shirt.
saye, say, assertion.
scalds, Scandinavian minstrels.
scallop, a pilgrim's cockle-shell worn as an emblem.
scapular, an ecclesiastical scarf or short cloak.
scathe, harm, injury.
scaur, a cliff, a precipitous bank of earth.
scaur'd, scared.
scrae, a bank of loose stones.
scrogg, a stunted tree, underwood.
sea-dog, a seal.
seguidille, a Spanish dance.
selcouth, strange, uncouth.
selle, a saddle.
seneschal, the steward of a castle.
sewer, an officer who serves up a feast.
shalm, a shawm, a musical instrument.
sheeling, a shepherd's hut.
sheen, bright, shining.

shent, shamed.
shirra, a sheriff.
shrieve, shrive, absolve.
shroud, a garment, a plaid.
sic, such.
siller, silver.
skirl, scream, sound shrilly.
sleights, tricks, stratagems.
slogan, the war-cry or gathering word of a Border clan.
snood, a maiden's hair-band or fillet.
soland, solan-goose, gannet.
sooth, true, truth.
sped, despatched, 'done for.'
speer, speir, ask.
speerings, tidings.
spell, make out, study out.
sperthe, a battle-axe.
splent, a splinter.
springlet, a small spring.
spule, a shoulder.
spurn, kick.
stag of ten, one having ten branches on his antlers.
stamock, the stomach.
stance, a station.
stane, stone.
stark, stout, stalwart.
stern, a star.
sterte, started.
stirrup-cup, a parting cup.
stole, an ecclesiastical scarf (sometimes a robe).
stoled, wearing the **stole**.
store, stored up.
stoun, stown, stolen.
stour, severe.
stowre, battle, tumult.
strain, stock, race.
strath, a broad river-valley.
strathspey, a Highland dance.
streight, strait.
strook, struck, stricken.
stumah, faithful.
swith, haste, quickly.
syde, long.
syne, since; **lang syne**, long ago.

tabard, a herald's coat.
tait, a tuft.
targe, a shield.
tarn, a mountain lake.
tartan, the full Highland dress, made of the chequered stuff so termed.
tett, a plait or plaited knot.
throstle, a thrush.
tide, time.
tine, lose; **tint**, lost.
tire, a head-dress.
toom, empty.
tottered, tattered, ragged.
toun, a town.
train, allure, entice.
tressure, a border (heraldic).
trews, Highland trousers.
trine, threefold, an astrological term.
trow, believe, trust.
trowls, passes round.
truncheon, a staff, the shaft of a spear.
twa, two.
tyke, a dog.
tyne, lose.

uncouth, strange, unknown.
uneath, not easily, with difficulty.
unsparred, unbarred.
upsees, a Bacchanalian cry or interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.
urchin, an elf.

vail, avail.
vail, lower, let fall.
vair, a kind of fur, probably of the squirrel.
vantage-coign, an advantageous position.
vaunt-brace, or **warn-brace**, armour for the forearm.
vaward, van, front.
vilde, vile.

wad, would.
wan, won.
Warden-raid, a raid commanded by a Border Warden in person.
ware, beware of.
warlock, a wizard.
warped, frozen.
warre, worse.

warrison, a note of assault.
warstle, wrestle.
wassail, spiced ale, a drinking-bout.
wauk, wake.
waur, worse.
weapon-schaw, a military array of a county, a muster.
weed, a garment.
weird, fate, doom.
whenas, when.
whilere, while-ere, erewhile, a while ago.
whiles, sometimes.
whilom, whilome, formerly.
whin, gorse, furze.
whingers, knives, poniards.
whinyard, a hunter's knife.
wight, active, gallant, war-like.
wildering, bewildering.
wimple, a veil.
woe-worth, woe be to.
woned, dwelt.
wraith, an apparition, a spectre.
wreak, avenge.
wud, would.
wuddie, the gallows.

yare, ready.
yate, a gate.
yaud, see **far yaud.**
yerk, jerk.
yode, went.

END OF VOLUME III

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